

T H B

DEVIL UPON TWO STICKS

IN ENGLAND.

THE
11
LEAVES UPON TWO STICKS

IN ENGLAND

THE
DEVIL UPON TWO STICKS
IN ENGLAND:
BEING
A CONTINUATION OF
LE DIABLE BOITEUX
OF
L E S A G E.

Haud passibus æquis.—VIRGIL.

VOL. V.

L O N D O N:
PRINTED AT THE Logographic Press;
AND SOLD BY
J. WALTER, No. 169, PICCADILLY; AND
THE PRINCIPAL BOOKSELLERS IN TOWN AND COUNTRY.
1791.

DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

IN ENGLAND

ALLOCATION OF

THE



THE

101

LONDON

Printed by the Government Printer

1911

THE

1911

1911

DEVIL UPON TWO STICKS.

C H A P. XVII.

The DEVIL upon Two STICKS discovers to DON CLEOFAS some of those interesting Occurrences of human Life which happen every Day.

DON CLEOFAS had just risen from his pillow to inform himself of the hour of the morning, when the Devil upon Two Sticks entered his chamber to save him that trouble. “Your Lordship,” said the Demon, “had occasion for more than common rest, to recruit yourself after the
VOL. V. B fatigue

fatigue of the preceding day ;—I did not, therefore, propose to intrude upon you, till your spirits were sufficiently renovated to bear the business of that which is before us. It is now almost noon, and having dispatched some very important commissions since we parted, I have it in my power to dedicate the remainder of the day to your service.” “ And would it be asking too great a favour of your worship,” said Don Cleofas, “ to enliven the quarter of an hour that will be employed in preparing me to attend you, with the history of those commissions which have employed your diabolic talents since our last separation.” “ Though they are all of considerable importance to the views of our confraternity,” replied the Demon, “ there is but one of them that is calculated to satisfy your particular curiosity ; and while you take your chocolate, I will tell my story.

“ I need not enlarge upon an opinion,” continued Asmodeus, “ which I have already
ready

ready so often repeated,—that women are the most powerful engines which a good or an evil spirit can employ to attain their several objects ; and that by the scale of female character in any country, its general morals may, at once, be measured and determined. The women of this island have hitherto borne away the palm of virtue, as well as beauty, from the nations of Europe:—Nay, though female excellence has, by the successful endeavours of your humble servant and his associates, been rather declining from its former pre-eminence, still, for I will confess the truth to you—I cannot but acknowledge that the most faithful wives, the most tender mothers, the most amiable companions, and the most accomplished women of this quarter of the globe, or indeed of the globe itself, are to be found in the country of which you are a temporary inhabitant.—Against a fabric of female virtue, in which all these characters are united, supported by a dignified consciousness of high rank

and ancient name, have all the various powers which I possess, been for some time employed. Indeed I began to think the fort impregnable; but a mine is at length formed, which I presume nothing human can withstand:—and, when the little history is finished which I am about to have the honour of relating to you, my noble friend, I believe, will be of the same opinion.

The charming Honoria, at the very dangerous age of sixteen, became enamoured of a young man, the son of a clergyman, who was the favourite and constant companion of her only brother. They had been educated at the same school,—were now at the same college,—and, during the academic vacations, this honoured, but unconscious object of Honoria's infant passion, was the welcome inhabitant of her father's house.

As a person of uncommon understanding and accomplishments, Mr. B———
was

was by no means unworthy of the most fond attachment of the female heart; but Honoria well knew, that to keep him within her sight, and to enjoy the pleasure of his society, her passion must be hidden in the most secret recesses of her bosom.—He could not but admire—and he naturally respected, the lovely sister of his friend and patron, to whom he owed his present comforts, and to whose protecting and promised favour he looked for future establishment and prosperity;—but in the vainest moment of his youth, and in the most ambitious dream of his fancy, he never glanced at the possibility of that preference of which he was the object, nor familiarized himself for an instant, with an idea so much above the most sanguine expectations of his mind.

The tender passion of Honoria, however, continued and increased.—A young woman in love, at her age, and with her sensibility, must be romantic.—The virtues,

the talents and amiable manners of its object, more than justified her affection to herself; and the inferiority of his situation, determined it to be pure and disinterested; so that it not only appeared to her as a virtue which might be innocently indulged, but as a sentiment that, in the course of human possibilities, might hereafter be realized into gratification.

“Such were the dreams of her innocent mind, that was most cruelly deceiving itself with pleasing, but fanciful expectations, till she was awakened from them by her mother, who beckoned her one fine morning into the garden, to inform her, that a young nobleman, of large fortune, had made proposals to marry her,—and that her father, who very much approved them, expected that she would, without any hesitation, receive Lord S—— as a lover, who was shortly to become her husband.

Honoria,

Honoria, whose tender fancy had been just amusing itself with the pictured happiness of humble life, and conducting the vine or honeysuckle around the windows of her imaginary cottage, where she and love might dwell together,—was at first stupified by the communication of the unexpected tidings; but the moment her reflection renewed its operations, she sunk down senseless on the lawn.—A violent and dangerous illness ensued, which was imputed to every cause but the real one; and though she wished not to live to be the wife of a man whom she did not, and could not love,—she was not at all disposed to die, and quit a world in which there was a being with whom she could be content to share the humblest allotment of it.—The latter sentiment, aided by her youth, the unremitted attentions of her friends, and particularly by the conduct of her noble lover,—who, not chusing to wait the uncertain return of her health, or attributing her illness to some cause that was not al-

together propitious to him,—had retreated gradually from his claim upon her, and was now become the professed admirer of another lady:—all these circumstances had, by slow degrees, restored her strength, and confirmed her health.—Her brother also set out shortly after to make a three years tour of Europe, and Mr. B.——, the cause of her sorrow, and the source of her happiness, accompanied him in his travels.

Honorina, however, possessed too many charms not to attract a croud of admirers, and within less than six months after her brother's departure, she was again the object of matrimonial solicitation, from a man of high rank, large fortune, and superior qualifications.—On this occasion her parents, apprehensive of a repetition of their stern and severe commands, thought it prudent to pursue a different, and, as it must prove to a person of Honorina's sensibility, a more effectual mode of rendering her conformable to their wishes.—They represented therefore the proposed union

union as a matter essential to their happiness,—as an event dear to their honour,—as a blessing that would console their age. Such arguments, continually repeated, and enforced with affectionate humility and supplicating tears, operated most powerfully on Honoria's sense of filial duty;—and though she was not unfaithful to her first and only passion, yet as it was no longer nourished by the presence of its object, and as she maintained no immediate correspondence with Mr. B——, it became daily more and more subservient to the influence of reason and of duty. In little more than a year, therefore, after his departure, she became the wife of Lord M——.

The good sense and solid virtue of Lady M—— supported her with honour in a situation wherein her heart had no concern.—Indeed that heart still retained so large a portion of her former passion, as to feel a very sensible alarm on the return of

her brother and his friend to England;—but she was then become the mother of two children, and in her parental tenderness for them, she found a powerful protection against those propensities of her affections, which were too deeply rooted in her breast not to prove, though they were no longer dangerous, very troublesome inmates of it. These tender protectors of Lady M——'s honour encreased;—she became the mother of seven children, and was universally considered as the brightest example of female virtue among the higher orders of this country.—Her superior qualities, of every denomination, were known to all the world;—her weakness, for it still remained, was known only to herself.

She was, however, now doomed to experience a new and very unexpected stroke of affliction:—Her lord, after several years of irreproachable conduct, became, as it were, in a moment, so deeply infatuated with one of his servant-maids, of the lowest class,

class, as not only to sacrifice, without any appearance of concern, his public and private honour to her influence, but to treat the best wife, and the best woman in the world, with the most mortifying contempt and personal cruelty.

The natural pride of conscious virtue dictated to Lady M—— the conduct it became her to pursue,—and she calmly quitted a situation in which she found nothing but insult on her dignity as a wife, and on her feelings as a woman.—A separation accordingly took place between her and her lord; and, while the execration of every virtuous mind followed him, the commiserating respect of all who had known and heard of her and her misfortunes, waited upon Lady M——. In this peculiar and affecting situation, and confiding in the conscious purity of her heart, she had recourse to Mr. B——, who was now become a dignitary in the church, to console and instruct her how to bear the oppressive load

of misfortune under which she laboured.—The passion of her earliest years still possessed a powerful interest in her mind ;—and she deceived herself when she imagined, that she made application to the object of it merely as the common friend of all her family, and a man of superior knowledge and understanding.

“ It was at this period,” continued Afmodeus, “ that I was appointed to the office of continuing the deception, to the decisive moment when such approved virtue should fall a victim to it.—To effect this important purpose, I inspired the afflicted lady with the unsuspected resolution of making her friend her confessor ; and to relate to him, in the most unreserved manner, and under the guise of aggravating her husband’s injustice, the passion of her early youth, and the sacrifice she had made to it :—I then awakened in his base and astonished soul an instant desire of availing himself of the unexpected confession, for
the

the grossest purposes of sensual gratification.

“In this state of advancing iniquity, I have left the artful lust of the one, with the unsuspicious, confiding passion of the other, to operate to the utter disgrace of both :— for you may conceive,” added the Demon, with a smile of triumph, “ what honour would redound to my infernal mission, if such a pattern of virtue should be brought, by my art, to console her sorrows in the arms of a sanctified ecclesiastic, whose consolatory friendship, and pious counsels, she had represented, to all her friends, as the foundation of those resolutions which alone could support her in her afflictions. For the demon of scandal is now on the watch, and will not delay an instant in communicating the event to her lord, who desires nothing so much as, by any means, to procure a divorce, in order that he might be enabled to marry the creature to whom, by my kind assistance, his
infatu-

infatuation hourly increases.—In short, if this fair lady should be brought to foul disgrace, we devils may cry, *Io triumphe!* for I will venture to foretel, without any fear of proving a false prophet, that her downfall would go a great way towards banishing all confidence in female virtue out of this country, where it has been hitherto considered as one of its greatest blessings, and most distinguished honours.”

“ You feel yourself, then,” said the Count, “ assured of success:”—“ Can you, my good Lord,” answered Asmodeus, “ who know a little of female sensibilities, reflect a moment on the circumstances which I have just related, and retain a doubt of it?—Nothing but a miracle can save her.”——“ And it would justify a miracle,” replied Don Cleofas, “ to do it.—But I am now ready to attend you, and shall take it as a favour if you will let me hear or see something that may, if possible, drive this miserable history of your’s from my

my reflection." "And without taking the trouble of going further than your window," said the Demon, "you will be gratified with a *coup d'oeil*, which may probably produce the effect you so much desire."

"It may, indeed," said Don Cleofas ; "for, I believe, the funeral procession of some prince, statesmen, or hero, is passing along the street before us. Death seems to have exhausted all his pomp and magnificence in conducting some distinguished victim to the tomb,—and to be proud of his conquest.—Such is the closing scene of human glory !"

"They are not, however," replied the Devil, "the remains of a prince, an hero, or a statesman, which are borne along with such mournful splendour before you : but of a man who was, at times, every one of those characters, as well as many others of an inferior nature.—He possessed the mimic sovereignty of the stage ; and was, perhaps,

perhaps, the most perfect actor in all the various branches of theatrical exhibition that the world ever beheld:—He may be said to have been the proxy of nature in all her casts and characters. The monarch and the clown,—the old man and the boy,—the philosopher and the libertine,—the sage and the insane,—the tyrant and the lover,—the miser and the spendthrift,—the fop and the footman,—the drunkard and the fool, were illustrated with equal force and truth, by his astonishing powers. Every passion and every foible,—every virtue and every vice of human nature, were represented by him as in a glass which reflected their real images. To-day he would alarm an audience with terror, or dissolve them with pity;—on the morrow he would enliven their reason, and keep the theatre in a roar.—But he is now come to the closing scene of his drama, in which, perhaps, it may be thought by some, that the *jeu de théâtre* is practised, and the *spectacle* continued, when

when the curtain should have been dropped for ever."

"But is it possible," exclaimed Don Cleofas, "that all this parade can be employed to honour the remains of a player!"

'A truce, my dear Lord, to your prejudices," interrupted the Demon; "and do be so obliging as to recollect, that you are in a country where superior merit, in every class and character, is considered with distinction; and where pre-eminent intellectual excellence can never fail, under the guiding spirit of common prudence, to attain an elevated point of public consideration. It may, perhaps, add a little to your astonishment, when you are informed that, among the numerous train of those who attend to shew their respectful attentions on this solemn occasion, there are many of the first characters in rank, fortune and literature, of this country.—Nor is this all; — the mimic king will be interred beneath

beneath the same roof with the monarchs and princes of the British empire."

"All this," interrupted the Count, "may be very right; but let your communicating spirit be so kind as to inform me, what superior marks of funeral honour can be shewn, by this enlightened people, to their orators, their poets, their historians, and their philosophers?" "To tell you the truth," replied the Demon, "many of them are carried very quietly to their graves;—and the only account I can give you for the distinction, proceeds, perhaps, from somewhat of a prevailing impulse in mankind, to be more attached to those who can afford pleasure, than to such as give instruction, and to lament them accordingly. You may shake your head, my good friend, if you please," added the Devil, "but this principle or defect, call it by what name you please, is in human nature,—and I do not take upon me to answer for it.—Though it is not improbable
but

but that before many hours are passed, an opportunity may offer of indulging you with a more ample consideration of this branch of human conduct." "In the mean time," said the Count, "and without any prejudice as to the character of any individual, be it what it may, upon whose unconscious carcase so much parade and expence is lavished, my reason is not sufficiently enlightened to approve this unavailing pomp of funeral honours." "If that be the case," answered Asmodeus, "I will amuse your present morning with a few scenes of mortality, some of which may be entirely to your Lordship's taste. Death is always on the wing,—this great city is a continual scene of his power, and there is not a part of his wide domain which does not, at this moment, offer some example of it.

"Such a proposal," said the Count, "would not always find me in the humour to meet it. At present, however, I am prepared

prepared for the mournful progress you propose,—the concluding scenes of life form an admirable school of wisdom;—” “and of folly also,” said the Demon; who immediately bore away Don Cleofas to a very commanding situation in the upper part of the town.

They were no sooner seated, than the Devil upon Two Sticks directed the attention of his friend to a chamber in the upper-story of an house in the adjoining street. “Upon a mattrafs in that room,” said he, “is stretched the corpse of a man who ranked high among the learned men of this country,—and whose works will add to its literary renown, while letters continue to be cultivated in the world.—Devoting, as he did, his life to studious labour, and having no children or family for whom it was his duty to procure a support, he looked for little more than to provide for the day that was passing over him; and the bookseller, who made a great fortune

fortune by his productions, being always ready to yield him the scanty provision with which he had accustomed himself to be satisfied, as well as to furnish him with all the implements of study,—this learned man did not interrupt the abstraction of his life by any attention to money, or any plan of accumulating it; so that when death came, it found him, as might be expected, without the means of commanding an honourable grave. The worthy bookseller thought it prudent to stifle all suspicion of being upwards of a thousand pounds in his debt, by refusing to advance a guinea towards his interment, which will owe its decency to the humanity of men who knew him only in his works. The gentleman who has just knocked at the door of the house, has been this morning among his friends, to inform them of the circumstance which I have just related to you, and is returned with a sum of money that he has collected from them, for the purpose of arranging such an unostentatious funeral

passage to their last home, affords those convincing reasons which will enable me to do it, without any other aid than the common logic of common sense.

“ The author lived in the retirement of his study, and was only known to mankind by the works which issued from it.— His manners, society, and habits of demeanour, were not suited to the general intercourse of life: so that when you had purchased his writings, you were possessed of all you could wish to know of him,— his better part was already with you.— Mankind were only interested in him from the pleasure which was produced, or the instruction which was afforded by his literary labours. His books are read, and the name of the writer treated with respect; and the one may continue to be equally read, and the other to be equally respected, when the author has long been numbered with the dead. But the actor, who is a continual source of public amusement,—
whose

whose personal exertions give added delight to the hours of the happy, and afford an oblivious antidote to those of the wretched, becomes an object of personal interest. When he dies, therefore, a vacancy is made in your ordinary pleasures and satisfactions; and as he leaves no representative behind him, but the regretful remembrance of his power to delight,—there is a natural, and indeed an amiable disposition,—for gratitude is more or less connected with it,—to pay the tribute of distinguished regard to the remains of such a character, because it is the last public testimony of respect which he can receive. It is a kind and applausive obedience to the *valet* and *plaudite* of the drama of life. The actor is most happily represented, by the first dramatic writer of this or any country, as a being who frets and struts his hour upon the stage,—and then is heard no more:—And, surely, the attendance on his hearse may, as I have just observed, be considered as the tributary applause

plause of the last scene, before the curtain drops, when the eye of the spectator beholds the actor no more. Besides, to continue the subject of posthumous honours,—the parade of funeral splendour, and the lengthened train of eminent persons, who lament the loss of those talents which have delighted and instructed them, is almost the whole sum of honour which the most perfect actor can receive, when he has made his exit from the drama of life. His name, indeed, is recorded; and while those who had witnessed and felt his superior powers remain on the stage, it will be mentioned with a warm and grateful eulogium; but when his contemporary generation is passed away, his memory will be but little cherished by those who were born after he was consigned to the tomb, and can only know what their forefathers thought concerning him.—While the author, who lived in the habits of studious research, and, as it were, in the solitude of learning, claims not the momentary respect of

crowded obsequies. The most distant posterity will know him, in a great measure, as well as those who were contemporaries with him;—and his name lives in those works which will never die.

“ Having enlarged a little on this subject, as I promised,” added Asmodeus, “ and, as I hope, to your full conviction, we will now proceed to a very different scene and situation of varying mortality.” “ My objection to funeral display,” observed the Count, “ arose from no other idea, than the unconscious state of the object on whom it is lavished; but when it is considered as proceeding from a consolatory sentiment in the living, I am more than disposed to be a convert to the opinions which you have offered for my instruction. If the trembling hand of reverential sorrow adorns the hearse with plumes, and banners, and escutcheons, it may be respected as a pious act of the heart, and

as

as a charity of the mind, which marks the amiable sensibility of the one, and the tender virtues of the other. But before my attention is called to another awful view of death,—do me the favour to satisfy my curiosity concerning a very living scene in the lower room of a large house immediately to the left of us; where somewhat of a singular dispute appears to be agitating by a small company of gentlemen; one of whom, who is dressed in black, is almost convulsed by the violence of his declamation; while his hearers are so little affected with his harangue, that they answer him with nothing more than an occasional shake of the head, or shrug of the shoulders. The young man who is enveloped, as I should suppose, in a dress of masquerade, takes no notice of either, and is more attentive to the warming his hands at the fire, than to the matter in contest between the rest of the company;—be it what it may.”

“ That scene of life,” said Asmodeus, “ arises also from the business of death.— It is what the medical people call a *dead case*; which is nothing more than a consultation of physicians, to discover the disorder of which their patient died. This is done by a little chirurgical ceremony of opening the body, in order to discover whether the mischief was done by the disease, or by themselves. The gentleman whose violent agitations you have remarked, has just lost a favourite child, a beautiful girl in her eighteenth year; and having got a little gentleman-like insight into physic and anatomy, he has taken upon him, in rather unreserved terms, to accuse the attending physicians of having mistaken her disorder. To prove their ignorance, he has summoned them to attend the interior examination of their late patient, and is now displaying that knowledge of the case, to which they can only answer by those significant tokens you have already described. The person whom
you

you suppose to be in an habit of disguise, is the anatomist, scientifically arrayed in his frock of dissection; and, very naturally, takes no part in a dispute in which he has no concern.—It is his office to employ the knife, and that of his medical associates to employ their judgment; and as it will be very shortly decided that the physicians are in the right, and that the poor young lady died according to the known rules of art,—the disappointed father will give them their fees,—for these gentlemen are paid for their attendance on the dead as well as the living,—and will then begin most seriously to lament the premature death of his darling child.

“The grand enemy of life,” continued the Demon, “takes no long strides in this quarter: for, at the very next door, there is a picture of distress, which, I am sure, will awaken all your sensibility.” “It does indeed,” answered Don Cleofas; “for, if my sight does not deceive me, I see a

C 3

lady

lady in a paroxysm of grief, which wears the most alarming appearance. Three servants can scarce govern her frantic strength, and the whole family seems to be in an universal state of confusion and dismay.—A much loved husband, an only son, or a darling daughter, must have been called suddenly to the tomb;—nay, the triple vengeance of fate, consigning them all, at the same moment, to the same grave, could alone excite such raging emotions of sorrow.” “Her distresses are great indeed,” interrupted Asmodeus; “and you must prepare all your tenderest sympathies to hear the accumulation of them:—For, last night, her adorable little lap-dog died in the act of becoming a mother;—and, within this half hour, a favourite Java sparrow fell dead from its perch.—But to withdraw your attention,” continued Asmodeus, smiling, “from such an overwhelming picture of human calamity, permit me to direct your regards to the first-floor of a large house to the right, whose

whose front is enriched with medallions and basso-relievos. — Within that bed whose curtains are so closely drawn, lies a sick man of very large fortune ;—his disorder is of that acute nature which medicine cannot always conquer,—but, when left to itself, is very rapid indeed in completing its purpose. The physicians who were called in this morning to afford their powerful aid, determined the situation of the patient to be very alarming, but by no means without hopes. They, therefore, prescribed the necessary remedies, and promised to return in the evening to judge of their effects. But an amiable younger brother of the sick gentleman, will save them the trouble of a third visit. He has undertaken, from a truly fraternal anxiety, to be the minister of the sick chamber : and, considering it as a most inhuman act to disturb his brother in his last moments, by tormenting him with useless medicines,—he empties the phials, from time to time, in the fire ; so that when the medical gentlemen

C 4

tle men return, they will find their patient hastily approaching to his last gasp, and his inconsoleable brother lamenting the sad event, by which he will inherit six thousand pounds a year.

grocer 1907
“ I could almost wish,” continued the Demon, “ that you had seen the better days of the expiring lady in the chamber directly opposite to us, whose beauty, after having been the lingering prey of disease, has at length yielded to the ghastly distortions of death.—She was lovely beyond the painting of fancy, or the description of poets. Her form rivalled the happiest proportions of Grecian sculpture, and her face might have become the single model of that ancient painter, who assembled the most lovely women of Athens, to combine, from their various charms, a representation of consummate beauty. As for her smiles,—they would, in the pictures of Pagan mythology, have been made to tempt

tempt lascivious Jove from the bowers of Olympus.

“ A nobleman of high rank led her to the altar ;—but, alas ! he too soon discovered that the envied casket possessed no intrinsic value :—It was enriched without to profusion, but contained nothing better within than the variegated toys of female folly. Vain, fantastic, thoughtless and dissipated, she soon lost the warm attentions of her husband ; and spurning the admonitions of prudence, became an easy prey to the seducer :—nor was it long before the world beheld her with the mingled sentiments of admiration, pity and contempt.

“ I need not tell you that a life of riot and dissipation is, of all others, the most unfriendly to beauty ; and this infatuated woman’s charms began to fade beneath the irregularities of it. To repair them, all the powers of cosmetic science were employed ; and the application of them being

governed by the same giddy, unreflecting spirit which influenced all her actions, her health was undermined,—the most torturing pains of incurable disease afflicted her latter days,—and this morning-star of beauty set before it was noon.

“ The gentleman whom you see walking to and fro in his library, is her Lord, who is more affected at the manner of her death, than at the event itself, which relieves him from a considerable portion of trouble and disgrace. Though it is not possible, if he possesses the least sensibility, but he must feel some concern at his last separation from a woman, whom he once so much admired and tenderly loved, and who was the mother of children to whom he is an affectionate father. They had long lived in a state of apparent indifference for each other; she did not, therefore, invite him to a sick chamber, where she might naturally suppose he did not wish to come; and he did not go thither

ther from any voluntary impulse, because he as naturally believed, that he should not be a welcome visitor. At length, however, when this imprudent woman found that her end drew nigh, she entreated a last interview with her Lord:—He obeyed the summons,—and approached the bed where she lay without one trace of all her former beauty;—her faded form worn by disease, disfigured by convulsions, and on which death seemed to prolong the banquet of destruction. He expected to hear the language of self-reproach, and see the wounding horrors of despair; but to his surprise and extreme satisfaction, he found her spirits calm,—her understanding in full comprehension, and her mind firm and collected to meet the dart that was already sped against her.—‘One embrace, my Lord,’ she feebly exclaimed, ‘before we part for ever!’ Which, being given and returned,—‘To you,’ continued her faltering lips, ‘I gave my first kiss;—to you I have now given my last,—and may God and you

‘ pardon what has passed between them.’ A violent convulsion immediately followed, and, in a few minutes, the groan of expiration escaped her.”

“ This is, indeed,” said Don Cleofas, “ a most affecting description ; and, I doubt not, the circumstances of the scene will secure the request that closed it.—Heaven, I trust, will,—and her Lord, surely, must forgive all her offences.” “ The latter,” answered Asmodeus, “ will certainly forget as well as forgive them ; but it will be in the arms of another woman, who has, for some time, been the object of a tender, but secret passion, and whom, as soon as the formal duties of mourning for his first wife are over, he will most assuredly take to be his second.”

“ And if my curiosity is not impertinent,” said the Count, “ permit me to ask, if his Lordship will mend his market by his future bargain?” — “ Upon the whole,

whole, he certainly will," replied the Demon; "for the lady who is just dead, plagued him by her folly,—and she whom he is destined to marry, will plague him with her prudence; which must be acknowledged to be rather the better plague of the two:—From hence, however, you may learn, my good Lord, that a wife is at best no better than a plague." Don Cleofas sighed at the reflection; and the Devil upon Two Sticks was impatient to turn the thoughts of his friend from the memory of a wife, who was an exception to the general rule; for, while she lived, she was a blessing to him.—He, therefore, contrived to direct his immediate attention to an old man, bolstered up in his bed, who was taking a cordial medicine, which his trembling hands could scarce lift to his head.

"The chamber, I perceive," said the Count, "is hung with pictures of battles and scenes of war." "It is true," replied
the

the Demon, “ they represent the different engagements, sieges, &c. in which the old Lord has taken a part. He is a general officer of the first rank in this country, and has passed his whole life between the fields of Mars and Venus. From the days of his youth to the present moment, he has had but two occupations, and two subjects of discourse,—women and war. In the piping times of peace, he was as debauched, as, in the day of battle, he was valiant. He was an hardy soldier and a gross lover:—He mingled no sentiment with his military honour,—nor any delicacy with his amorous passions;—so that instead of crowning his old age with the well-earned laurels of his better days, he has never ceased to curse the debilitating hour that put an end to his sensual enjoyments. He has, this very morning, declared to an old friend who has just left him,—that he would consent to be a private centinel in his own regiment,—to be dis-cased to the bone, and tied up to the halberts

berts to receive a thousand lashes,—to be repeated every three months, for three years to come, if it would restore him to the libidinous age of five and twenty.—Before to-morrow night he will be no more:—He is sensible of his approaching end, and blasphemes the power that ordains it.”

“ This old Lord,” said the Count, “ is a philosopher of your own school; and, to say the truth, he supports his character to the last.” “ It rather mortifies me,” replied Asmodeus, “ that I must check your triumph by a very serious declaration, that such a man is by no means found to forward the purposes for which I was commanded into existence. His inclinations were too depraved, and favoured too much of brutal instinct, to do important mischief to any but himself. It is true, that he has passed his life with harlots,—but he has made none himself. He preferred a corporal’s wife, whom he could

command to his tent, or a common prostitute, whom he could summons out of the street, to a Duchess of the most enchanting beauty, whom he must attend in her own chamber. His conversation, as well as his conduct, disgusted youth,—shocked old age, and could be borne by none but men of his own cast and character ; or such who found it necessary to submit to his depravities, in order to obtain his favour.

“ The man who can give to vice the semblance of virtue,—who can make intemperance wear the appearance of innocent festivity, —who can win his way by a thousand artifices, into the confidence of the easy-hearted man,—and quench the most jealous suspicions of cautious woman,—he is the philosopher whom our Pandemonium will crown with the choicest bays that grow on the Stygian bank. And such an one you may now see in that coach which is proceeding along the street in the
flow

slow and solemn pace of a funeral procession.

“He also is a dying lord,—a man of letters and of wit,—a statesman of no mean account, and a courtier of the first manners.—He preserves, too, his character to the last, and will smile, and say good things, till his tongue is mute for ever.—That man has done a deal of precious mischief in his time, and has written those instructions which will continue to propagate it as long as they are read:—And in such a seducing form have they been composed, that I have every reason to believe they will be read while elegant literature is understood and admired in the language of this country.

“He will tell you, to smile in the face of an enemy, till you have a fair opportunity of stabbing him to the heart;—to heap favours on the husband whose bed you wish

wish to violate ;—to get, by any means, the father into your power, whose daughter you want to seduce.—He will inform you, that the surest way to undermine female virtue, is by an artful and progressive corruption of the morals ;—and that you do well to gratify your passions, without any consideration but their enjoyment.—He will teach, that the most admired and venerated excellence of particular men, is nothing more than the effect of superior art ;—and that the greatest villain is only an unfortunate hypocrite.—He will allow that laws are necessary to prevent mankind from cutting each other's throats, as well as to secure them in the pursuit of their objects, and the enjoyment of their pleasures ; and that certain decourments are wisely provided to regulate the manners, and heighten the comforts of social beings ; but that there is no moral obligation to regard the one or the other, but such as arises from a sense of our own social convenience.—These have been the leading prin-

principles of his life, and will accompany him to his grave.

“ From his first appearance in the world, he practised no other.—He never did what wore the guise of a generous, a noble, or a kind action, but for some selfish purpose;—and, for the same end, he was by no means indisposed,—when he had no dread of any resulting inconvenience,—to injustice, meanness, or depravity. His mind was equal to the highest flights of vanity, but not sufficiently great or capacious to admit an atom of real ambition.—To be admired, was the summit of his happiness,—and he accordingly cloathed his manners, his words, and his whole deportment of body and mind, with that polished exterior, which is so well formed to please.—It was natural, therefore, that he should esteem in others, those qualifications with which he studied to adorn himself—Indeed, so habituated was he to weigh and determine on characters from the elegance of their demeanour,

meanour, and the refinement of their decorum, that he would, most certainly, look with greater complacency and regard on a well-bred murderer, on his way to the gallows, than a rough, unseemly seaman, who had brought home honour, victory and wealth to his country.—In his social pleasures he required elegant companions, or polished flatterers; and his sensual dispositions, which were ever subordinate to his vanity, were not only heightened, but in a great measure inspired, by the rank, fashion, or superior virtue, of the woman who became the object of it.—Venus herself, in the form of a chamber-maid, had no temptations for him; but a female *bel esprit* of quality,—a fashionable woman of exemplary virtue,—the choice, well-guarded mistress of an intimate friend;—in short, a conquest which might be supposed to require superior address, were alone able to awaken the ardour of his passions.

“ Such

“ Such a man, your Lordship must be convinced, is a fine engine in the hands of my brethren; though, to tell you the truth, it was determined by the councils of our Pandemonium, to appoint a Spirit to the special and sole purposes of watching over this nobleman’s life; and it is with pleasure I perceive that he preserves his important charge in an uniform state of elegant depravity to the last.—For as he has lived without virtue from motives of interest, he will die without repentance from a principle of vanity. He is now so weak, that he can scarce bear the very slow progress of his carriage; but he will not be long subject to such an inconvenience, and he is himself of that opinion. Indeed he has, for some time, called these slow-paced airings, with his usual pleasantry of expression, ‘the *re-bearfals* of his last part; and this is the last of them; for, in a few days, he will perform it, and the *bearse* will bear his remains to the gloomy, unsocial company of his ancestors.

“ But

“But to prove to your Lordship,” continued Asmodeus, “that I take my subjects as chance presents them, and without any design upon your morals, or any sinister purposes of my own, I shall introduce you to a scene, which it would be my duty, if it were in my power, to hide from every eye, and to keep from every tongue.—It forms a very striking contrast to all you have just beheld; and I am afraid that you have good enough in you to be delighted with it. It is the death-bed of a virtuous man; and the house before which a quantity of straw is spread along the street, will present it to you.”

“I see, indeed,” said Don Cleofas, “a company of people—confusedly arranged, as it were, in different parts of a large chamber, some in tears, and all bearing on their countenances the marks of poignant sorrow. At the moment I am speaking, they all, as if influenced by the same involuntary emotion of submissive grief, approach

proach the bed, where I see a sick person raised up on pillows, and, as it appears, preparing to address, and probably for the last time, those persons who, I fear, may be already called his surviving family."

"It is even so," answered Asmodeus; "and, for your sake, I will do justice to this bright example of human virtue; and not only give you the history of this excellent man, but mortify myself with a repetition of those farewell instructions which he is about to pronounce; and will prove the last act of his venerable life.

"He is a gentleman of large fortune, which he inherited from his father, who had amassed it, from very small beginnings, by a life of industrious and respectable commerce. Having frequently, as he grew into wealth, experienced the want of a liberal education in himself,—though, to say the truth, it was to that circumstance he owes his fortune,—he determined
to

to give his son every advantage of instruction and accomplishment, which this enlightened country and foreign travel could produce. When, however, that object was attained, and the young man was the admiration of all who knew him, the narrow spirit of trading life prevented the father from allowing his son that liberal income which his superior education, the fostered habits of his mind, and his future expectations, naturally required. The old gentleman, who thought no expence too great, while it paid the interest of improvement, could not bring himself to place the son of whom he was so proud, in a situation of common independence, for what he called doing nothing.

“ Thus, this accomplished young gentleman, after having been educated, in the most liberal manner, at Eton and Oxford, and supported in the elegance of the first ranks of life, during his tour through the principal countries of Europe, found himself

himself obliged to pass his time between his father's town residence in the neighbourhood of Fenchurch-street, and the paternal country house at five miles distance from the Royal Exchange; and there he served an apprenticeship of three years, not indeed to his father's trade, but to his father's humours. He, however, had the good sense to employ that tardy period in studious amusements; and, at the end of it, found himself, by the sudden death of the old man, who died as he sat at table, in possession of near three hundred thousand pounds:

“ But the prudence which accompanied the years of paternal restraint, took its flight on the approach of liberty. Mr. B—— did not hesitate a moment to avail himself of every luxurious privilege of his new situation.—He accordingly took a fine house at the west-end of the town,—furnished it with the utmost elegance,—saw what is called the best company, and was

VOL. V. D soon

soon seduced into all the dissipations of fashionable life. His poor, old, industrious, accumulating father had not been dead twelve months, before the young man was member of a gaming-club,—the protector of an Italian Opera singer,—the proprietor of a stud of race-horses, and security for upwards of twenty thousand pounds for some of his intimate friends, who were not worth a shilling. In short, those passions which had been so unwisely restrained by the ignorance of parental precaution, now burst forth into all the riot of folly, and extravagance of dissipation. The young men of fashion, according to their different characters, considered him either as a golden dupe, a convenient friend, or a generous companion; while the more experienced and reflecting part of his acquaintance, shook their heads at a career, which, if continued but for a few years, must end in misery and ruin.

“ A

“ At this period, during the race-week of a country-town, which he had attended, to witness the defeat of a favourite horse, and to lose a considerable sum of money, he accidentally danced with a young lady, a provincial beauty of the neighbourhood, and became violently enamoured of her.

“ His sudden passion was the jeer of all to whom he communicated it ;—but their ribaldry could not dissipate the pain it occasioned in his breast. — Having been for some time in the habit of finding a ready indulgence of all his wishes, he determined at once to satisfy his impatience ;—and, on the fourth day after he had seen the lady, he waited upon her mother, who was her only surviving parent, to inform her of the situation of his heart, the extent of his fortune, and the profusion of his intended settlement, if he was approved as the lover of her daughter.

“ The inconsiderate vanity of the young man led him to believe, that he should carry the citadel by a *coup de main*, which it must be impossible to resist ;—and he would hardly believe his senses, when he received a check in his first approach to the fortress.—The lady, after she had heard his declaration, begged leave to retire for a few minutes ;—and, on returning with her daughter, whose presence, she said, in a matter of so much consequence to her happiness, was essentially necessary, she informed Mr. B——, in terms of the utmost politeness, that, though his offers were of an extent to which the object of his attentions had no reasonable claim, it appeared to be her duty to advise her only and darling child to give the proposition he had made, that consideration, and to follow it with that enquiry and consultation of friends, which such an important business demanded.—‘ It would, therefore,’ she said, ‘ require some time to give a determinate answer to the propositions

tions with which they had been honoured. You know, my dear Caroline,' added the good lady, 'that I am not your mother, but your equal friend, on this, as on every other circumstance of your life; be so kind, therefore, as to say, whether my opinion is in perfect correspondence with your own, on this very unexpected occasion?'

'My inferior understanding,' answered the amiable Caroline, 'most sincerely approves the conduct you propose; and, in the suggestion of it, I feel an added proof of that affection and tenderness, which I have ever experienced from the best of mothers.'

"Mr. B—— gave a forced approbation to this admirable example of maternal precaution and filial acquiescence; which, if the sight of the young lady had not given new ardour to his passion, he would have considered, and perhaps have treated, as

insult and impertinence.—He of course took his leave, but with a consolatory assurance in his own mind, that as a knowledge of his fortune and fashionable figure in the world, must be the result of their enquiries concerning him, there would be no future hesitation to receive him in the character which he had proposed to them.

“ When, therefore, his eager impatience forced him to renew his visit, in order to be made completely happy, by hearing the determination which his vanity had set down as a matter of indubitable certainty, he was received and astonished with the following declaration from the mother of the lovely Caroline.—

‘ Truth, Sir, may be sometimes offensive ;—but in addressing it to you on this occasion, you will, I am sure, do me the justice to believe, that I do not mean to give offence.—The first object of my life is my daughter’s happiness,—and
though

though I should wish to manifest my
zeal for it, without wounding the deli-
cacy of your feelings,—yet, if I cannot
fulfil my intentions without such an
unwilling circumstance, I must be
content to act the part of a faithful pa-
rent, at the risk even of your displeasure.
Your fortune, Sir, and the proffered ar-
rangements of it, are much beyond my
expectations for my daughter, and her
wishes for herself;—but she desires me
to acquaint you, that she will never
marry a man, however wealthy, whose
pursuits are connected with the horse-
course,—who associates with gamesters,
however titled or distinguished,—and
who is known rather by the elegance of
his dissipations, than the splendour of his
virtues. This being our unalterable re-
solution, we must beg the favour of you
to excuse us from hearing any thing fur-
ther on the subject,—and not to consi-
der it as an offence that we decline the
honour of your future attentions. At

‘ the same time, Sir, you may be assured,
‘ that if you do not yourself think proper
‘ to divulge what has passed between us, it
‘ will remain a secret for ever.’—As she
uttered the last sentence, the good lady
rang the bell, and, having told the servant
to order Mr. B——’s carriage, she po-
litely left the room.

“ He had now nothing to do but to quit
the house; but was so disconcerted in
doing it, that he sat several minutes in his
chaise, without telling the postillions where
to drive:—at length, however, he recovered
himself so far as to give the necessary direc-
tions; and, not quite certain whether he
dreamed or was awake, he returned to the
neighbouring town, which he quitted as
soon as the post-horses could be changed,
and proceeded to London.

“ This journey could not be a very com-
fortable one, — for pique, mortification,
resentment, and, I will add, shame, were
the

the companions of it:—for Mr. B——— possessed an excellent understanding, a mind well stored with knowledge, and, at the bottom, a delicacy of sentiment which nothing could have smothered but the peculiar circumstances of his life. He was like a bird who had been so long pent up in his cage, that he did not know what use to make of his wings when he was indulged with unlimited flight.

“ He now, however, for the first time since the death of his father, began to examine a little into his conduct, the mode of life he had adopted, and the respective characters of his chosen associates;—and he saw nothing in any of them to give him pleasure, or that could make him amends for the blessing of which their councils and example had deprived him. At the same time, he could not summon the resolution to get rid of the former, in order that he might become worthy of the latter. When, therefore, he found that the fascina-

ting idea of the lovely Caroline could not be banished from his heart by the encouraged resentment of mortified vanity, he replunged into the suspended career of dissipation, with the hope that he should lose the image which haunted him, amid the successive and continual variety of his pleasures.—But the charming image still pursued him; and the excesses of wine, from which he had hitherto abstained, were added to the number.

“ At this time Sir W. R——, an old friend of Mr. B——’s father, and who had been a kind friend to the young man, but was forgotten or disregarded among the novelties of his present situation, had occasion to call upon him concerning the arrangement of a charitable donation, left by the elder Mr. B——, of which Sir W. had been appointed the sole trustee.—After the business was settled, some awkward apologies from Mr. B——, for his past inattention to a man who had been the kind friend

friend of his youth, and the companion of his father's life, gave that gentleman an opportunity to address him in the following manner :—

‘ I was used, for your sake, Mr. B——, to sigh over the fruitless efforts I made to prevail on your poor father to allow you a larger range of society and amusement than he permitted after your return from abroad. I continually told him, till I foresaw that any further suggestions on the subject would violate a friendship of forty years,—that if he did not, by degrees, habituate you, as it were, to the great fortune you would one day possess, there was every reason to fear the worst consequences when you should come into the possession of it. He, poor good man, would laugh at my suspicions, and insist on the truth of his favourite principle,—that the longer you remained in the habits of restraint, the less inclined you would be to break from it; and that to

‘ keep you without any part of your future
‘ fortune during his life, would render
‘ you more attentive to its preservation
‘ and improvement, when his death would
‘ leave you master of the whole of it.—
‘ My suspicions, however, were but too
‘ well founded, and all I apprehended for
‘ you is come to pass. My poor friend is
‘ gone where he is insensible to the error
‘ he committed, and I survive him most
‘ seriously to lament it.

‘ You are, I find, in the high road to
‘ ruin and dishonour.—As you proceed, a
‘ very few years will bring your fortune,
‘ great as it is, to an end;—and, as it
‘ will be consumed, according to all pre-
‘ sent appearances, in a manner, and by
‘ means, inconsistent not only with the
‘ principles of virtue, but with the deco-
‘ rum of a gentleman,—your future distress
‘ will be without any alleviation.—There
‘ may, indeed, be a dignity in poverty,—
‘ but it must be the poverty of virtue, and
‘ not

‘ not of vice.—Respect may follow mis-
‘ fortune, as well as pity; but it must be
‘ the misfortune of unyielding integrity.—
‘ The wretchedness, alas! that is brought
‘ on by riot, dissipation, intemperance,
‘ and folly, cannot beget respect;—and
‘ pity will be impeded in its way towards
‘ it, by indignation or contempt.

‘ I have never seen you since we stood
‘ together by your father’s grave:—Nor
‘ does it astonish me; for I was your
‘ friend when you associated with virtue,
‘ and therefore must be an abhorrent, be-
‘ cause a reproachful object, to one who
‘ is become the inmate of vice.—You will
‘ not dare to tell me that you are happy,—
‘ for every feature of your pallid counte-
‘ nance assures me that you are wretched.—
‘ The porter at your gate is pampered
‘ into sleekness;—and I passed through
‘ an avenue of well-fed, smiling varlets, to
‘ find their master lolling on a couch,
‘ languid with the fatigues of pleasure,—
‘ feverish

‘ feverish from the fumes of intempe-
‘ rance,—and with a mind brooding over
‘ its discontents, because it has not a past
‘ reflection, or future hope, to feed it
‘ with solid satisfaction.—Riches can do
‘ something towards happiness;—but they
‘ cannot do all.—There is no market
‘ where honour, wisdom, virtue, or hap-
‘ piness will be the immediate return to
‘ any gold that the treasuries of the world
‘ could offer.—Gold will purchase plea-
‘ sure, for pleasure is an harlot that any
‘ wealthy fool may bribe for the capricious
‘ enjoyment of the hour;—but happiness
‘ is above its single reach.—Money will
‘ feed gluttony,—flatter pride,—indulge
‘ voluptuousness,—and gratify sensuality;
‘ but, unless it is an engine in the hands
‘ of wisdom, it will never produce any
‘ real joy.

‘ Does it never occur to you, as you
‘ proceed in your career of extravagance,
‘ that in a very few years you will have
‘ dis-

‘ dissipated in folly, to say no worse, the
‘ noble fortune that was acquired by your
‘ father in the long course of an indefati-
‘ gable life, which, whatever peculiarities
‘ he might possess, never deviated an in-
‘ stant from the most irreproachable in-
‘ tegrity?

‘ When you awake from your noon-
‘ tide slumbers, after a night passed in a
‘ gaming-house, do you awake to com-
‘ fort? —Does a correspondence with
‘ your grooms and stable-keepers elevate
‘ your mind into a pleasant thought?—
‘ When your Italian enamorata sends to
‘ demand the stated payments of her enor-
‘ mous allowance,—while you are writing
‘ the draft on your Banker to satisfy her
‘ extravagance, does your heart vibrate
‘ with any thing like a sensation of which
‘ you are not secretly ashamed? When
‘ your friends, as you call them, who fre-
‘ quent your house, and enjoy the luxu-
‘ ries of your fortune, offer their eulogi-
‘ ums,—

‘ums,—will your reason,—if you consult
‘it for a moment, suffer you to believe a
‘sentence of their purchased, treacherous
‘praise?—Vice and folly may be proud of
‘the gay and gaudy picture of their wealth,
‘while virtue, passing along in inconve-
‘nience and penury, to the hut that is its
‘home, will look with disdain on the
‘gilded car that bears them to their bowers
‘of delight.

‘You must,’ continued the worthy
man, ‘I know that you must, feel the
‘truth of this assertion;—for, in the un-
‘guarded moments of confidential in-
‘temperance, you have yourself told the
‘tale of triumphant virtue, by relating
‘the reception your proposals of marriage
‘found from one of the most charming
‘and accomplished women in this king-
‘dom.—I have long known her family,—
‘and it is in my power to inform you,
‘that if your character and conduct had
‘continued to be what I remember it
‘once

‘ once was,—you would have been re-
‘ ceived with pleasure as the lover of
‘ Caroline C——, though you had
‘ possessed but a tenth part of your present
‘ fortune.

‘ I shall not trouble you with another
‘ visit. — If, however, my admonitions
‘ should awaken you from the delirium of
‘ folly,—if you should wish to extricate
‘ yourself from the labyrinth in which you
‘ are involved,—if you want the aid of a
‘ sincere friendship, and faithful experi-
‘ ence, to confirm your wavering resolu-
‘ tions, should you possess them,—to return
‘ to the home of virtue and honour, which
‘ you have so blindly abandoned,—you
‘ know where to find a friend.—I have
‘ spoken with the freedom that becomes
‘ me;—I have done that which it was my
‘ duty to perform;—and I consider my-
‘ self as having exercised a right which
‘ belongs to me :—for know, Sir,—if the
‘ unhappy influence which now governs
‘ you

‘ you should continue till it has completed
‘ your ruin,—the repenting prodigal will
‘ find my doors open to him, when every
‘ other shall be shut against him.—The
‘ son of my old and worthy friend shall
‘ never want the best consolations it may
‘ be in my power to afford him.’

“ As Sir W—— R—— uttered the last words, he wiped a tear from his eye, and casting a look of tenderness on Mr. B——, who lay with his face buried in the cushion of a sofa, he silently withdrew.—Indeed so affected was the young man with what he had heard,—that some minutes had passed away before he discovered that his visitor had left him.

“ The lecture, however, which he had received, did not pass away with the excellent man who delivered it.—On the contrary, it sunk deep into Mr. B——’s mind,—and though it was not followed by any immediate determination to obey the

the councils of it, he felt a most incumbent duty to give it, at least, a serious consideration. He, therefore, sent an immediate excuse to a tavern party with whom he was engaged to dine,—ordered a single cover to be laid in his library,—and gave positive orders to forbid the intrusion of any visitor during the rest of the day.

“There cannot be a better prognostic of success,” continued Asmodeus, “in affairs of this nature, than when a man dares to remain alone, and to enter into a quiet and serious examination of himself and the circumstances that affect him, with no other council than what he derives from the senate of his own bosom.—It may, sometimes, even remove a threatening difficulty, but it never fails, in some degree or other, to lessen it, when a man has the courage to look the evil calmly in the face.

“ Mr.

“ Mr. B—— was so fortunate as to act under such a resolution; and, in taking a review of the different circumstances of his life, he did not suffer his self-love, or an idle vanity, to pass over any parts or circumstances, because mortification or self-reproach threatened the reflection on them. He investigated the whole with the spirit of an impartial judge; nevertheless, I am rather disposed to think, that the severe sentence of to-day, might have been revoked by the relapse of to-morrow, if the lovely Caroline had not sat on the bench with him. That such a woman should reject and despise him, with all his wealth and accomplishments, because he had abandoned a life of virtue, operated not only more powerfully than all the sage and authoritative reflections of his venerable friend, but, perhaps, operated alone to fix in his mind a determined resolution to regain it.

“ Though

“ Though this was, by no means, a day of untroubled satisfaction, Mr. B—— found a quietude of spirit, and a refreshing kind of repose, which he had not lately experienced, through the course of it. In short, he felt his mind so invigorated by these rare hours of undisturbed solitude, that he determined to pass the evening in examining the immediate and existing state of his fortune and domestic arrangements. As the whole of that wealth which his father had left him was invested in the different public funds, he had only to discover what was left of it, and he would immediately ascertain, with an unerring precision, the sum total of what he had dissipated. It did not require much time to inform himself, that during the eighteen months which had elapsed since the old man's death, he had contrived, in various foolish and friendly ways, to get rid of fifty thousand pounds.

“ This

“ This discovery, for it was such to him, filled his mind with astonishment and alarm; and the very unpleasant reflections it produced, determined him to lose no time in applying to the advice and assistance of Sir W—— R——. It was too late to see him that evening; but, at an early hour of the next morning, he was at the bed-side of the friend of his childhood and his youth,—and who was now about to become the preserving guardian of his riper years.

“ In this situation he did not hesitate to unfold the state and distress of his mind,—to discover the real posture of his affairs,—to ask the counsels of friendship,—and to promise an unreserved submission to them.

‘ Your conduct, at this moment,’ answered Sir W—— R——, ‘ is, to me, a most sufficient proof that your mind, though turned aside from its true bias, has

has received no material injury.—It has been in a delirium, which a little absence from the persons and circumstances that occasioned it, will dissipate, and its primitive virtue will be resumed.—I feel this assurance with a degree of satisfaction I know not how to express: the rest of the business is not worth an unpleasant thought.—If the fifty thousand pounds which you have dissipated in folly and extravagance, should, in the end, purchase you that experience which will make your future life honourable and happy, it has been most profitably expended.—Your remaining fortune is more than equal to a much higher degree of real splendour than you have hitherto displayed.—But the existing evil must be cut up by the roots;—the whole of your present system must be completely extirpated;—and, to do that with effect, you must determine, without delay, to quit the kingdom.’

‘Quit

‘Quit the kingdom,’—exclaimed Mr. B——, with a look of surprise, and a tone of disappointment.—‘I comprehend
‘your feelings,’ continued Sir W——
R——, ‘but it must be so :—and believe
‘me, such a measure is not only the best,
‘but, as it appears to me, the only one
‘which you can adopt, to secure the ob-
‘jects which you have most at heart.—
‘You must break the chain which con-
‘nects you with your present mode of life;
‘and if that is, as it ought to be, the
‘first wish of your heart, you must remove
‘yourself far away from the influence of
‘those friends, companions, or acquaint-
‘ance, call them what you please, who
‘forged it for you.—Retire quietly to some
‘unfrequented town on the continent,—
‘let your retreat be known to none but
‘me,—entrust me with the settlement of
‘your affairs, during your absence,—and, I
‘trust, it will not be long before I shall en-
‘joy the very great satisfaction of inviting
‘you back,—not indeed to gaming-tables,

‘ or race-horses, or fashionable clubs, or
‘ opera fingers,—but to a situation in
‘ which the path of true honour will be
‘ open before you ; and, if I find you re-
‘ solved to deserve it, to all the happiness
‘ which Caroline C—— is capable of
‘ bestowing on you.—For, as the most
‘ animating encouragement I can give, to
‘ a solid reformation of your life, I shall
‘ declare to you, that I have not the least
‘ doubt of succeeding in an object so dear
‘ to your present wishes, and so essential
‘ to your future happiness,—if you will
‘ consent to be guided and governed by
‘ me.’—‘ Then,’ exclaimed Mr. B——,
‘ order the chaise this instant,—tell me
‘ where I am to go,—and while the prepa-
‘ rations for my immediate flight are ma-
‘ king, let the necessary forms be executed
‘ which will give you, during my absence,
‘ the most unreserved and ample powers to
‘ act as your saving wisdom shall dictate,
‘ in every concern which I leave behind
‘ me!’

VOL. V.

E

Mr.

“Mr. B—— accordingly set out, in the evening, for a small town in Normandy, where it was agreed that he should fix a temporary residence;—and, on the following day, his friend entered with the most active and effectual zeal on the business of reform.—Mr. B——’s servants were all discharged,—his horses consigned to the hammer,—and his house, with all its various detail of splendour, was transferred, by the same talismanic power; but, above all, the whole history of what had passed was faithfully and warmly represented to Mrs. C—— and her daughter, by Sir W—— R——, who was a distant and respected relation of their family.

“In short,” continued Asmodeus, “so well was the whole plan of this business arranged and conducted, that in less than twelve months after his sudden departure from London, Mr. B—— was returned to it a different being in sentiment, opinion, connections, and happiness;—
and

and was very soon after united to the most charming of her sex.

“ They, indeed, may be said to have been the happiest pair of human kind;—and well did they deserve the prosperity which shone around them.—He commanded the respect of all ranks of people, who knew or had heard of him, from the day he became the happy husband of the best of women to this awful moment, when he is about to join her spirit for ever.

“ Nor did her life afford a less splendid example of domestic and conjugal virtue.—They were blessed with a numerous progeny like themselves;—and the only material interruption of their happiness, arose from the loss of three of their little ones in one year;—a circumstance which affected them more, and continued to affect them longer than might have been expected from persons of their understanding and religious dispositions;—more especially as seven chil-

dren yet remained to grow up, in the possession of every quality, both of body and mind, which the most anxious and tender parents could wish to adorn their offspring.

“It is about five years since Mrs. B—— quitted the world.—She had been to Paris, with Mr. B—— to meet their two elder sons, on their return from Italy; and a very violent storm which overtook their vessel between Calais and Dover, had wrought her alarms to such an height, that an illness ensued, and terminated in the grave.—Mr. B—— bore this lamentable loss with resignation;—but in spite of his endeavours to struggle with existence, it has slowly, and secretly undermined his health,—which, till that event had known no interruption,—and most certainly hastened the affecting period which is now the object of your attention.

“The very superior gratification,” continued Almodeus, “which your virtu-

ous

ous mind,—I well know,—must have received from this interesting history, has repaid me for the mortification which, I am ready to acknowledge, my diabolic nature has experienced, in the task of relating it.”

“Your candour,” replied Don Cleofas, “is equal to your friendship;—and I hope you will continue the exercise of it by a confession, that there are characters scattered about this wicked world, who are above your reach, or superior to your influence.”

“To sooth your triumph,” replied the Demon, “I will freely acknowledge that there are;—but to keep it within due bounds, I must inform you, that the names of them would not form a very numerous calendar. The influence of female charms, when exerted under the guidance of superior virtue, tends more to the advancement

excellence among men, than any other human incentive.—It is evident, from daily experience, that the manners of the stronger sex receive their polish from the common intercourse of female society:—It cannot, therefore, but follow, that the friendship, affection, and love of women of superior character and accomplishments, must have the same effect upon the minds of men, and proportionably improve and adorn them. The seducing powers of the lovely sex, as they are directed and employed, shape men into the worst or best of beings. The latter is in the example before us.—His last accents have borne their testimony to it;—they were as I shall repeat them to you.”

Don Cleofas assured his instructor that every attentive faculty he possessed would be rivetted to the sequel of his relation;—and Asmodeus immediately continued it in the words of the dying man.

‘ My

‘ My beloved children,

‘ Among the many unmerited blessings
‘ with which it has pleased a gracious Pro-
‘ vidence to favour me, during the course
‘ of my life,—there have been none for
‘ which I feel myself more sincerely dis-
‘ posed to be thankful, than for the power
‘ I possess of declaring to you the senti-
‘ ments of my mind, and of pouring forth
‘ the affections of my heart, now that I
‘ am come to the close of it.—The phy-
‘ cians, in obedience to my request, have
‘ this morning informed me that I have,
‘ at most, but a very few days to live :—
‘ If, therefore, I neglect to perform my
‘ last duty to-day, I may not be in a con-
‘ dition, either of body or mind, to per-
‘ form it to-morrow.

‘ Your tears, my dear children, do not
‘ distress me ;—they are the natural tri-
‘ butes of that filial affection which you
‘ owe to a parent, who, from the moment

‘ of your birth, has ever considered your
‘ happiness as the first object and care of
‘ his life.—If they are, as I trust, the tears
‘ of grateful tenderness, you may, with-
‘ out reproach, indulge the piety of your
‘ sorrows, at a moment the most affecting
‘ to human nature.—I can, indeed, say,
‘ with the most delightful assurance, that
‘ you need not weep for me;—for I have
‘ passed the billows of the world, and am
‘ entering the haven of peace.—And if
‘ you feel, as I hope you do, a firm,
‘ rooted love of virtue within you, it will
‘ be needless also to weep for yourselves;
‘ —your lives will answer the purpose
‘ for which they are given,—and the end
‘ of them must be happy.—But if nature
‘ forces her waters upon your cheek,
‘ reason and religion will,—I trust,—soon
‘ wipe them off for ever.

‘ I leave you in the possession of all the
‘ blessings of life;—but they will not se-
‘ cure your happiness, unless true wisdom
‘ influences

‘ influences your application of them.—
‘ Wealth and station are surrounded with
‘ dangers, to which inferior life is less
‘ frequently exposed.—The power to gra-
‘ tify every passion of man’s deceitful
‘ heart, too often proves the greatest curse
‘ that can befall the vaunting possessors of
‘ it.—Ambition, pride, vanity, and plea-
‘ sure, are always engaged in seducing the
‘ hearts of those who enjoy the means of
‘ their gratification ;—and, if the avenues
‘ are not continually guarded by the watch-
‘ ful centinels of reason and religion,
‘ it is almost impossible for the credulous,
‘ confiding experience of early years, to
‘ prevent their insidious and unsuspected
‘ approaches.

‘ There was a period,—fortunately in-
‘ deed for me it was but a short period of
‘ of my life,—when I was the slave of the
‘ most dangerous passions ;—and I was in
‘ the high career of ruin and destruction,—
‘ when the commanding virtues of your

‘ angelic mother charmed me from the fatal
‘ shores on which I was hastening to be
‘ shipwrecked for ever. I was blind, and she
‘ opened my eyes ;—I was weak, and she
‘ gave me strength ;—I was immerfed in
‘ vice, and she called me back to virtue ;—
‘ I was guilty, and she restored me to inno-
‘ cence ;—I was a wretch, and she made
‘ me happy.—She was my honour,—my
‘ crown,—my comfort through life,—and
‘ I look up to her as my falvation, at this
‘ moment, when I am at the clofe of it.—
‘ My union with her, I have ever con-
‘ fidered, with the moft abundant grati-
‘ tude, as the gracious difpensation of
‘ Heaven’s mercy to me ;—and I wifh to
‘ impreff this invaluable bleffing beftowed
‘ on your father, in the remembrance of
‘ you all ;—and my laft breath will expire
‘ in grateful praife to the giver of all good,
‘ for the ineflimable poffeffion of it.

‘ You are young,—in the full enjoy-
‘ ment of health,—and have the fair pro-
mise

'mise of many years yet to come;—but,
 'remember that what I am to-day, you
 'may be to-morrow:—And though it be
 'your allotments to have your lives pro-
 'longed beyond the common date of
 'man, you must at length arrive at this
 'hour;—and may years of virtue and ho-
 'nour conduct you to it.

'The world is full of snares and temp-
 'tations;—they lie in every path, and as-
 'sume every form.—The road to destruc-
 'tion is often strewed with roses,—and
 'pointed flints are seen to pave the way
 'to honour.—Vice will assume the sem-
 'blance of virtue;—and falsehood, by a
 'thousand seducing blandishments, de-
 'ceive the incautious heart to receive it as
 'truth.—To avoid these dangers, and to
 'guard against these deceptions, begin by
 'habituating yourselves to the difficult and
 'mortifying task of suspecting yourselves.--
 'At your early period of life, your most
 'important business is to check the im-

‘ angelic mother charmed me from the fatal
‘ shores on which I was hastening to be
‘ shipwrecked for ever. I was blind, and she
‘ opened my eyes ;—I was weak, and she
‘ gave me strength ;—I was immerfed in
‘ vice, and she called me back to virtue;—
‘ I was guilty, and she restored me to inno-
‘ cence ;—I was a wretch, and she made
‘ me happy.—She was my honour,—my
‘ crown,—my comfort through life,—and
‘ I look up to her as my falvation, at this
‘ moment, when I am at the clofe of it.—
‘ My union with her, I have ever con-
‘ sidered, with the moft abundant grati-
‘ tude, as the gracious difpensation of
‘ Heaven’s mercy to me;—and I wifh to
‘ impreff this invaluable bleffing beftowed
‘ on your father, in the remembrance of
‘ you all ;—and my laft breath will expire
‘ in grateful praife to the giver of all good,
‘ for the ineflimable poffeffion of it.

‘ You are young,—in the full enjoy-
‘ ment of health,—and have the fair pro-
mife

‘ mise of many years yet to come;—but,
‘ remember that what I am to-day, you
‘ may be to-morrow :—And though it be
‘ your allotments to have your lives pro-
‘ longed beyond the common date of
‘ man, you must at length arrive at this
‘ hour ;—and may years of virtue and ho-
‘ nour conduct you to it.

‘ The world is full of snares and temp-
‘ tations ;—they lie in every path, and as-
‘ sume every form.—The road to destruc-
‘ tion is often strewed with roses,—and
‘ pointed flints are seen to pave the way
‘ to honour.—Vice will assume the fem-
‘ blance of virtue ;—and falsehood, by a
‘ thousand seducing blandishments, de-
‘ ceive the incautious heart to receive it as
‘ truth.—To avoid these dangers, and to
‘ guard against these deceptions, begin by
‘ habituating yourselves to the difficult and
‘ mortifying task of suspecting yourselves.--
‘ At your early period of life, your most
‘ important business is to check the im-

‘ pulse of inclination, and to pause, before you indulge it.—In the same proportion as objects, whatever they may be, solicit your enjoyment, consider well the consequences of enjoying them.—Whatever does not bear the most determined form of good, examine as an evil.

‘ This is a world, my children, in which precaution is not only a very necessary, but a very principal duty. You cannot suppose, for an instant, that I can offer to your practice, the low, base and degrading suspicion of little minds; for there are circumstances and situations, where to doubt, is more dishonourable than to be deceived; but it is a caution by no means inconsistent with the most liberal character, which I recommend to your adoption. You must doubt of others with candour,—and it is yourselves alone towards whom I urge the utmost rigour of suspicion.—It is necessary for the honour

honour and happiness of your lives, that
' there should be those, and I trust you
' will find many of them, towards whom
' suspicion would be a crime. Would it
' not be criminal in you, my children, to
' suspect each other?—And I pray—most
' devoutly pray—as I know by experi-
' ence the blessings of it,—that the con-
' nections which you will form hereafter,
' may be so wisely chosen, as greatly to
' enlarge the boundaries of your confi-
' dence.

' There is no virtue which adorns and
' elevates our nature, but is, more or less,
' connected with some vice which defaces
' and degrades it; and it is a principal
' cause of human misfortune, that, from
' the want of due consideration, the one is
' so often taken for the other.—Courage
' and rashness,—generosity and profusion,
' —economy and avarice,—humility and
' slavishness,—prudence and meanness,—
' piety and enthusiasm, are, among others,
' vir-

‘ virtues and vices of the same quali-
‘ ties, as they are practised or enjoyed
‘ under the influence of wisdom or of
‘ folly.—For as all virtue consists in the
‘ love and practice of justice, so all vice
‘ proceeds from excess, and the spirit of
‘ moderation will, of course, secure you
‘ from it.

‘ Believe me, we were not sent into
‘ this world to make life one continual
‘ scene of prohibition and self-denial.—
‘ The good Being that made us, allows
‘ the enjoyment of every pleasure,—and
‘ there is plenty of them,—which does not
‘ tend to the injury of others and of our-
‘ selves.—The right accomplishment of
‘ noble objects,—the fulfilling every duty
‘ of our station,—the improvement of our
‘ intellectual faculties by the aids of art
‘ and science,—the invigorating employ-
‘ ments that relax from more serious at-
‘ tentions, and promote health of body
‘ and chearfulness of mind,—the exercise
‘ of

‘ of the relative and social virtues,—and
‘ the practice of piety and religion :—
‘ Surely these are real pleasures ;—they
‘ occupy the mind,—they elevate the
‘ heart,—and remorse and repentance fol-
‘ low not in their train.—It may, per-
‘ haps, prove difficult for you always to
‘ distinguish the precise point where the
‘ virtue ends and the vice begins ; but a
‘ moderate and cautious conduct will al-
‘ ways lessen the danger of being deceived ;
‘ and if, at any time, error should prevail
‘ in the choice, the experience of a vir-
‘ tuous mind will prove its future pro-
‘ tector against similar deceptions.

‘ At the same time, my children, I
‘ cannot flatter you with the hopes, that
‘ life can, because it ought not to be
‘ passed without affliction ; or that the
‘ most consummate virtue will not meet
‘ with trials and difficulties. Nay, without
‘ them, there would be no virtue :—it is the
‘ manful contest with our infirmities and
‘ sorrows,

‘ sorrows, which gives it its nature and its
‘ name; and it is the victory over them
‘ which ensures its reward on earth and in
‘ heaven. But, in the hour of extreme
‘ difficulty and danger, if such an hour
‘ should come to any of you, when your
‘ best powers seem to give way, and your
‘ trembling virtue shrinks from the con-
‘ flict,—I need not surely direct you to
‘ that sure and saving aid which is pro-
‘ mised to those who ask it.

‘ My children,—continue to love one
‘ another.—Be each other’s joy, comfort
‘ and protection.—If any of you should be
‘ in danger from the enemies of virtue, let
‘ the rest form a surrounding phalanx to
‘ preserve them;—if any should sink be-
‘ neath the predominating influence of a
‘ corrupt world, let not those of you who
‘ remain in strength, forsake them in their
‘ weakness. There is no situation of
‘ misfortune, or even of crime, that can
‘ quench

‘ quench your fraternal love for each
‘ other.

‘ My sons, remember and imitate the
‘ virtues possessed by your father;—my
‘ daughters, imitate all that you remem-
‘ ber or have heard of your mother. If
‘ her sainted spirit is permitted to behold
‘ this hour, she will delight in it; and
‘ may her celestial virtues shed their sanc-
‘ tification upon it. My soul pants to
‘ rejoin her.—I have only strength to re-
‘ peat once more my blessing to you, and
‘ to accompany it with my dying prayer
‘ to heaven, that it may rest upon you for
‘ ever.’

“ Such were the last words of this ex-
cellent man;—and, as he uttered them, he
funk down into the arms of death.—His
children, rivetted by their affliction to the
scene, still surround the bed in all the sa-
cred devotion of filial sorrow.”

“ This,

“ This !” exclaimed Don Cleofas, while the tears started from his eyes,—“ This is a spectacle worthy the contemplation of a God !”——“ But not of a Devil,” said Asmodeus ; “ and, therefore, we will now, if you please, direct our attentions to another quarter.—I have been engaged for some time, I think, in gratifying your fine feelings ; and now your Lordship will be so good, as to let me take an opportunity to gratify mine.—And, as it very fortunately happens, the means, I perceive, are at hand.

“ You will, therefore,” continued he, “ be so obliging as to direct your watery eyes to the upper apartment of a very handsome house in the street to the left of us, where an elderly gentleman, in a crimson night-gown, is seated in an arm-chair, by his bed-side, with a table before him ; at which a man in black is busily employed in writing. The one is a sick man, who has not many days to live ; and
the

the other is a lawyer, who is, at this moment, engaged in as unpleasant a ceremony as can possibly happen to a very wealthy, money-lending, and money-getting personage,—that of making his last will and testament.

“ This unfortunate person, for he is going to leave all his riches behind him, is among those ingenious people, whose industry has advanced them in the world from very small beginnings to great opulence. He was the fruit of the tender loves of a driver of a sand-cart and a cinder wench, and having obtained the education of a charity school, he was so fortunate as to be taken into the service of a most worthy member of the synagogue; who, under the appearance of a very small pawnbroker's shop, kept a very large receptacle for stolen goods. There he was, at a very early age, instructed in the knowledge of those petty arts of fraud, rapine and extortion, which he has himself enlarged,

larged, and turned to so good an account, in the more advanced part of his life, as to enable him to die worth an hundred thousand pounds, acquired by these arts, after having lived, for upwards of thirty years, in affluence and luxury.

“He is one of the tribe of money-lenders,—a most useful and honourable body of men, and who are held in the highest estimation by our confraternity, of whose interests they are very thriving and conscientious promoters: indeed, they are considered to be of so much importance by our infernal Divan, as to have a particular Spirit appointed to watch over their concerns, and forward their advantage.

“Consider, my dear friend,” continued the Demon, “how very precious any society of men must be to us, in whom a destitution of all principle, honour, sentiment and feeling, is essential to the perfection of their character.—Sight is not
more

more necessary to a painter, or hearing to a singer,—than obduracy of heart and disregard of reputation to a money-lender.—Their market is in scenes of misery and distress,—of folly and of ruin:—Their prosperity arises alone from the vicious, the profligate and the abandoned:—Their harpy appetites are ever ready to devour, without pity or remorse, the portion of the widow and the fatherless.—No tears can melt—no entreaties soften them.—A savage self-interest guards the den of their rugged minds from the intrusion of any human virtue.—But I shall not enter, at present, into a particular description of this class of people, as some curious individuals of it will, hereafter, present themselves to our examination, in the various engagements of their profession.

“ The good man before us, has, for some time, possessed the very comfortable assurance, that his abode in this world will not be of very long duration; as well as

the still more exhilarating reflection, that his accounts are not quite satisfactorily settled for the next. He, therefore, with his usual prudence and precaution, sent for a clergyman in his neighbourhood, a man of the most exemplary piety, in order to consult with him on the means of arranging this important business in such a manner, as to quiet, if possible, some unpleasant apprehensions that harass and alarm him.

“ This amiable divine, having lived in a very contracted sphere, and giving up all his time and attention to the duties of his office, had left the world very much to itself;—and while he offered his daily prayers to Heaven to make it better, had no idea, till this visit, that it was worse than he believed it.—He was, therefore, so astonished and dismayed at hearing the catalogue of offences which his penitent acknowledged to be the torments of his conscience, that it was with great difficulty he could

could, in any degree, calm his mind to discharge the duty before him. These, however, were among the best actions of this repentant sinner; for had he unfolded a very few examples of those ruinous and deep-laid artifices, which he thought proper, for very good reasons, to keep to himself, the poor, honest clergyman would have been deprived, for that day at least, of all powers to proceed in the pious work of spiritual consolation.

“ As it was, some little time was necessary to recover the tranquillity of spirit which was requisite to his present functions.—He then informed the sick man, that, as the offences which lay heavy upon his mind, appeared to consist almost entirely of frauds, respecting money transactions, it would be absolutely necessary for him to make ample restitution to those whom he had defrauded; or, if they should be dead, to their heirs or representatives, whoever, or wherever, they might be;

be; and that, unless he accompanied his repentance with such an act of justice, which could alone prove the sincerity of his contrition,—he would greatly deceive himself, if he indulged any expectation of forgiveness at that tribunal before which he was hastening to appear,—and where no wealth could bribe, or artifice deceive, the Judge of it.

“ Such doctrine must be allowed to be strictly orthodox, and in perfect conformity to the duty of his office, and the character who pronounced it;—but the idea of restitution, was unfortunately that, of all others, which must be most repugnant to the mind of a money-lender.

“ *Restitution*, was that peculiar word in the copious vocabulary of the English language, which he had never been able to pronounce ~~himself~~, and could never hear pronounced by any other, without cursing the tongue that gave it articulation. He, therefore,

therefore, without making any reply, hastily rang the bell, and, after wishing the doctor a good morning, he drew the curtains of his bed where he lay, and left the servant to conduct his spiritual visitor out of the house.

“ Though the proposal of *restitution* irritated and engrossed his mind for some time, it could not make him forget that he was in a dying condition, and that something must be done, if possible, to calm the returning disquietudes of his spirit.—He accordingly sent for another reverend gentleman, who was one of his coffee-house acquaintance, and knew the world and human nature too well, to think, in any circumstances of life or death, of proposing *restitution* to an usurer.—He therefore, when the sick man hinted at the peccadillos which troubled his conscience, recommended him, as he had no family, or near relations, to leave his fortune to the purposes of charity, and to render his

VOL. V. F name

name not only honourable but immortal, from the splendour of some foundation; which, by forming a current of benevolence that might run for ages, would do away, in the eye of Heaven, any sin which had been committed in acquiring the wealth which was to be the fountain of it.

“ This doctrine, though not quite so consonant to theological principles as that which he had already heard, was much better suited to the weakness and vanity of the usurer’s mind. It was, in truth, most admirably adapted to his situation; and to promote that self-deception which could alone produce any consolation to his mind. He, therefore, did not hesitate an instant to express his most cordial disposition to realize it; and if his reverence had been governed by no other views but the ease of the poor man’s mind, and the advancement of Christian charity, the will would have been made without delay, and the intention

tention of it been very shortly put in execution.—But amid his benevolent dispositions for others, some little prospects of interest occurred to himself; and when the sick man urged his immediate advice as to the particular mode in which he should arrange the disposition of his fortune, so as to answer, in the best possible manner, the proposed object of it,—the pious father confessor thought that a business of so much importance should not be done in an hurry; and as he perceived that the penitent was not in danger of immediate dissolution, he begged his permission to defer the conclusion of the matter before them till the following morning; when he undertook to produce a plan for his approbation, the execution of which would place the name of the poor flattered usurer in the first class of charitable founders, of this or any other country; and that the whole should be so completely arranged and digested, as to be inserted in his will

without any trouble but that of transcribing it.

“The reverend counsellor accordingly returned home,—sent hastily for his brother, who is a proctor in the civil law courts, to assist him; and they soon contrived the plan of a charitable institution, the establishment of which was to be left to his superintendence; and when established, to his direction, with certain stipends and advantages to be derived from both those situations; so that, as he observed at the time, if the will were but made, and the testator dead, he would not change his prospects for any thing short of a mitre.

“In the mean time, the old gentleman had desired his attorney to meet the spiritual director the following morning, in order that he might complete the instrument, which would purchase the pardon of Heaven for all his iniquities, by
giving

giving the whole of his great fortune at his death, to a certain class of people called the poor ; to one of whom this singular man had never given a farthing during the whole course of his life.

“ It will here, however, be necessary to inform you, that this man’s pleasures were not entirely confined to the getting of money.—He enjoyed his luxuries,—and among them, he supported a very beautiful woman, in the best stile of elegant life,—and to whom, in the hours of his doating tendernefs, he had promised to bequeath the wealth he should leave behind him.—She has, therefore, been for some time, directing all her thoughts, and employing all her arts, to such an important interest.

“ In the late visits she paid to her friend, she found his situation to be such as would by no means justify the risk of recalling his former and reiterated promises to his

remembrance. She, therefore, determined to let her careffes and endearments wear no other appearance than their usual guise of tender affection; and wait till some favourable opportunity offered, which had not yet occurred, or till her better genius suggested the means of commanding success.

“ In this emergency, she conceived and practised a manœuvre that seemed to be the offspring of such a suggestion. This was no less than to send for the confidential attorney of her protector; and, having bribed him to communicate what he knew of the business, she made a proposal, which was instantly realized into an engagement, to accompany him to the altar, in case her name should be inserted as the principal legatee, in the last will and testament he was about to settle for their common friend.

“ The next morning, therefore, when all the parties were assembled to execute
this

this important business, the reverend and spiritual counsellor read to the testator the plan he had formed for the pious and charitable foundation ; which, after the payment of his debts, that were very small, and his funeral expences, that would not be very great, was to employ the whole of his ample fortune.—This part of the ceremony being performed with the most becoming solemnity, the sick man taking his pious friend by the hand, expressed his obligations to him, again and again, for the real comfort he had administered, and the wise counsel he had afforded to him ; and, in a tone of impatience, desired the attorney to transcribe the whole without delay, in all the necessary forms, as he was very anxious to perform this last, and, to use his own expression, this best act of his life,—that he might have no further interruption in contemplating the better state, to which he hoped such an employment of his fortune would secure him a final admission.

“The lawyer however, who, among other wise maxims, had adopted the principle, that ‘charity begins at home,’—and preferred, as many other excellent men of his profession are known to do, his own temporal interests, to the eternal happiness of all mankind,—perceived, with no common concern, that the plan arranged between the lady and himself would be totally destroyed, if this last will and testament should be executed according to his present instructions.—As it was not, however, in the line of his profession to make any objection to the matter of the bequest, he availed himself of the privilege he might be allowed to possess, of gaining at least a little time, by striking boldly at the manner of it. He, therefore, as an act of professional duty, represented the absolute necessity there was to guard the disposition of so large a fortune against any possibility of future objection,—hinted at the opposition which the Court of Chancery always makes to perpetuities of every kind,—muttered

tered some incoherent, unintelligible expressions relative to the Statute of Mortmain, and concluded with his solemn opinion, that the first Counsel should be consulted on the important occasion.

“ The sick man, who, in every part of his life, had been accustomed to the tricks and chicanery of lawyers, expressed the most anxious wish that this last act of it should set them at defiance. He, therefore, not only gave his immediate assent to the proposal, but declared his obligations to the attorney for having suggested it.— The worthy clergyman also, who considered himself as deeply interested in the legal forms of this testamentary arrangement, was equally desirous that it should be placed beyond the reach of future litigation; and therefore enforced the proposition to submit the form of the will to the examination and correction of the most eminent practitioners in the conveyancing branch of law practice: but, at the same time,

F 5

very

very considerately recommended all possible dispatch, that the mind of his friend might not be disturbed, or his pious contemplations interrupted, by any unnecessary attention to the concerns of the world.

“ It may, perhaps,” continued the Demon, “ be proper to inform you, as a matter of some little curiosity, that the word *dispatch*, in the vocabulary of a lawyer, has, by no means, the same acceptation which is annexed to it in the general dictionary of mankind : and, in this particular instance, there were some very powerful reasons,—of which, though you are made acquainted with them, the principal parties were entirely ignorant,—that tended to confirm the professional definition of it.—The attorney, therefore, left the company in great apparent haste;—but, instead of going to lay the will in question before any eminent personage of the law, he proceeded, by way of dispatching the business, to astonish his fair copartner
with

with the very unexpected account of what had happened, and to have a little petticoat consultation with her, on the measures which must be immediately taken to forward their mutual projects.

“ In this dilemma, it was determined by these two worthy people, that a will should be formed to favour her pretensions,—and that he should contrive to get it executed by the dying man, during the absence of the rascal of a clergyman, in a firm belief that it was the charitable testament to which he had already consented.—It is on this very business that you have now the pleasure of seeing them together.

“ But the habits of life attend poor mortals to their end; and though this poor, good man cared not how many people signed the papers he presented to them, without examination, it had ever been a favourite article of his religion, never to write his own name, be the occasion what

it might, without a most minute attention to all possible consequences of his signature.—When, therefore, the will, which he had directed to be prepared, was read over to him, and the attorney was in the act of placing the instrument, of his own preparing, for execution,—the sick man very unexpectedly called for his spectacles, and declared his intention of taking a cursory view of the parchment himself.—This circumstance, as may well be supposed, baffled this cunning project, at the moment when success seemed on the point of crowning it.—But the lawyer, under pretence of some mistake in copying the original draft, has contrived to delay the final completion of the business till to-morrow, in order to renew his attempt, as he hopes, with better fortune.

“The clergyman is waiting at home, in a painful state of impatience, to receive the expected invitation to attend on the
impor-

important business which he has so cunningly contrived; and is cursing the lawyers, with all the malice of a priest, for their unseasonable delay:—But the whole will be shortly settled, in a manner very different indeed from the expectations, and in direct opposition to the wishes, of all the parties concerned in it; for that grim conveyancer, called Death, will, this very evening, execute a deed that precludes every other.—In short, the will has been so long deferred, that the money-lender will die intestate;—and his wealth, instead of pampering the trustees of an useless charity, or elevating a prostitute to be the wife of an attorney, will descend to a nephew, a very worthy man, whom he would never see or acknowledge, who has long been a clerk in the accompting-house of a merchant at Rotterdam, and not only enjoys the confidence of his employers, but the esteem of all who know him.”

“ This

“ This,” said Don Cleofas, “ is a very pleasant, though I fear rather a rare, example of things taking their right course, in spite of the church and the law.—But do, I beg of you, satisfy my curiosity as to the manner in which the disappointed parties will console themselves.”

“ As for the lady,” answered the Demon, “ she will find some comfort in a large pocket-book of bank-notes, which, being alone with her gallant when he was seized with the fit that preceded his last illness,—she contrived, without much difficulty, to transfer from his pocket to her own;—and, in the alarm for his eternal concerns which succeeded, he had totally forgot this pretty little packet of temporal interests.—The parson and the attorney have agreed to join in securing the favour of the heir at law, by persuading him that he is indebted to them for his fortune,—by delaying the execution of a will, which would have conveyed it from him.—

As

As such an assertion is founded in fact, and as they will only relate just so much of the matter as will serve their purpose, it is not impossible but they may have more success with the nephew than they had with the uncle."

"But, if I mistake not," said the Count, "there is, in the very next house, another scene of a last will and testament;—for I see a chamber half full of people, and a sick person in bed dictating to a young man who is writing at a table beside it."

"It is even so," answered Asmodeus; "but this history is so different from the last, that you will scarce know how to credit such a dissimilitude, in two transactions of a similar nature.—This poor, worthy, old fashioned gentleman, is surrounded by a tribe of children and grand-children;—his dying chamber has no visitor from the church or the law;—and so far is he from fearing death, or considering it as a subject

ject of alarm, that he looks upon it merely as a journey,—the manner of which he chuses to order himself.—He is accordingly, at this moment, employed in arranging the ceremonials of his funeral, with as much care and attention as if it were some particular festival of pleasure.—The persons he wishes to be invited to attend him to his grave,—the different stations they are to hold on the occasion,—the decorations of his hearse,—the inscription on his coffin,—the sculpture of his tomb,—the number of mourning-rings, scarfs, gloves, and hatbands, which are to be distributed,—the quantity of baked meats which are to furnish out the funeral banquet,—are all minutely dictated to one of his grandsons, who is writing them down beside him.—When he has mentioned all the various circumstances which he is anxious should constitute the ceremonial that is to form the convoy of his remains to their last home,—and having the whole read over to him,—he will charge his family,
in

in the most solemn manner, to see all these, his last injunctions, faithfully fulfilled;—and when he has received their united promises to obey his commands,—he will consider the last duties of his life to be fully discharged,—and die in peace.”

“ This,” exclaimed Don Cleofas, “ is a most extraordinary scene indeed; and though by no means so interesting, if you will permit me to use the expression, as that which preceded,—it fills me with an equal, if not a superior degree of astonishment.”

“ The last scene of life,” observed the Demon, “ like the scenes in every part of it, supplies us with examples of human weakness and caprice, as well as of human strength and wisdom.—And as a curious instance of the former, be so obliging as to direct your most earnest attentions to the room over the shop to the right of us, where you will see another dying man,
who

who is quitting life in a very different way from any you have yet seen, or will, probably, ever see again, though you were to attain to patriarchal longevity.

“ It would, most assuredly, be the height of impertinence in me,” replied the Count, “ to make the least hesitation in giving credit to you, whose faculties can pervade all exterior appearances, and perceive what is passing behind them : but, to my mind, I never saw, in my life, any thing less like a scene of death, than the chamber to which your worship has been pleased particularly to direct my attention. - All that I see, is a little, old man, eating his dinner and drinking his wine as if he were beginning life, instead of concluding it ; while his company possesses an appearance of jollity and merriment, as if they were laughing with the gossips at a christening, instead of preparing for the solemnities of a funeral.—Perhaps this pleasant society may be of the same opinion

nion which history relates of the Thracians,—who were said to have had the custom among them of weeping over the cradle, and rejoicing beside the grave.”

“ I will excuse your introducing the *Gen. Selwyn* Thracians,” answered the Demon, “ on the occasion; but, notwithstanding all that living scene which you behold, the good man, whom you see eating with such an hearty appetite, and to whose *bons mots* we are indebted for those successive peals of laughter which reach us in our elevated situation,—has, I assure you, a very short time to live.

“ He has been very seriously informed by his physicians, whom he consulted for a dropsy, with which he has been some time afflicted,—that if he continued his usual course of good living, his life would be of very short duration;—that he must submit to regimen, or submit to die.—As he gave the doctors their fees, he told them, smiling,

ling, 'that he should take the chance of
' *the die*,—and would, therefore, dispense
' with any more of their attendance.' He
is a very pleasant fellow, and has long been
a convert to the Epicurean notion, that
life without its pleasures, is not worth ha-
ving.—He is, therefore, determined to con-
tinue that convivial intemperance which
forms all his satisfaction, and take the
chance of the consequences that may fol-
low.

"But this is not all;—this gentleman
has been through life a very celebrated
punster; and an excellence in the ready,
whimsical application of equivocal expres-
sion, feeds his vanity to the moment he is
about to quit it.—For, incredible as it may
appear, the fact is, that no sooner had the
faculty pronounced sentence of death upon
him, than he immediately left a lodging
where he had lived, to his liking, for
many years, and has taken up his abode
at a *shoemaker's*, for no other reason what-

ever,

ever, but to die, as it were, in acting, when he can no longer speak, a pun.—He has accordingly informed his friends of his situation, earnestly requesting they will not delay to come and see him,—and expresses his hopes that they will find him merry at the *Last*.”

“ When you first proposed the course of this day’s observations,” said Don Cleofas, “ I felt a secret repugnance at the solemn progress you had been pleased to mark out for me; but I perceive, that though Death never varies his horrid shape, and bears every class of mankind to the same unchangeable period, life dances on in all its various forms, till the equalising power cloaths them in the same garb, and gives them the same complexion.

“ Though the circumstance which attracts my notice,” continued the Count, “ may not be immediately connected with our present occupation, it may afford a little

the relaxation from the gravity of it, if you will be so kind as to inform me concerning the signification of that armorial emblazonment, which several workmen are employed in fixing to the front of a white house, at no great distance from the apartment of the dying punster. It is, I presume, a mark of public distinction, granted for some public service performed by the inhabitant of the building on which it is placed."

"It is a very proper subject of your attention," answered the Devil upon Two Sticks; for it has nothing to do with life: on the contrary, it is a memorial of death, and informs the passenger that the mistress of the mansion has quitted it for ever.

"She was a pleasant, tender-hearted woman, and has fallen a sacrifice to the delicate sensibilities of her character.—You will, I am sure, pity her fate, when I inform you, that she actually died from vexa-

tion and disappointment, because her husband sold an elegant Villa which had injured his fortune in building, and would have ruined him to maintain in the style of extravagance suited to her taste and inclinations. Such is the caprice of the human mind,—or rather, to speak more philosophically,—such is the imperfection of human happiness:—The desire of that which cannot be possessed, must occasion discontent, in any situation of life;—and the poor man who wants a coat, may not feel more distress than the rich man who sighs after a ribbon. Disappointed ambition has broken, at least, as many hearts as poverty itself, with its dreaded train of evils.—Nay, the loss of beauty has sometimes given, and will again give, premature subjects to the realms of death.

“ If I were a sovereign myself,” said Don Cleofas, “ I should never find philosophy sufficient to survive the loss of my kingdom.—It does not, therefore, surprise me,

me, that the sudden dissolution of the most flattering of all empires, the dominion over hearts, should prove a mortal disappointment to a weak and vain woman. Not but I trust there are many of the sex who would even bear the loss of beauty,—at least without breaking their hearts.”

“ I acknowledge the truth of your opinion,” answered Asmodeus ; “ and will even confirm it by an opinion of my own,—that the generality, if not all, of those who would be deeply affected at the sudden, accidental loss of their personal charms, owe the malignity of their disappointment not to any original defect in their nature, but to the mode of their education, which almost universally tends, from their very cradles, to render their persons the first and darling object of their attention.—Their nurses in the nursery,—their governesses in the school-room, their mothers in the drawing-room,—and the men every where, encourage the idea, that beauty is the most
3 elevating

elevating and important possession of female youth. The lecture, it is true, may be given to the mind,—but the principal care and attention is paid to the form.—A fashionable mother, who has an handsome daughter, will instruct the understanding, or leave it to be instructed by others, with comparative indifference; but will arrange the decoration of her person, and shape the decorum, or, in other words, the artifices of behaviour, with the most minute regard, and all the warmest feelings of maternal affection. If it were in our way, at present, which it may be hereafter, to discover the precise arrangements of time employed in the best modern female education, we should find, I believe, the part of it that relates to the toilette, engrossing a proportion which would leave you to wonder how women are such rational beings as you, in general, find them.—Indeed, to speak the truth of the women of fashion, it is more owing to their vanity than their virtue,—to the mortification

which attends the loss of character, than a sense of honour in the possession of it,—that they preserve themselves from the dangers with which their education and the manners of the world so continually surround them.

“ But to quit this prosing strain of morality,” continued Asmodeus, “ do me the favour to say if you can discover any thing in that room, whose windows are so cautiously guarded by shades and *jalousies*, from the glare of unwelcome light, and the prying curiosity of opposite neighbours?” “ To tell you the truth,” answered Don Cleofas, “ I am equally excluded with] both the one and the other, from this interesting chamber; and shall, I believe, remain in an equal state of impossibility to view whatever rarities it may contain, if you do not think proper to remove the obstacles that are placed before it;—or to lend me, for the occasion, the lynx’s beam, which may enable me to see
through

through them." "That might easily be contrived," replied the Demon; "and if it were necessary, I should not hesitate to communicate to you the pervading faculty:—But as the history I am about to relate, would gain very little, if any thing, from your being admitted to a sight of the object of it, I will proceed to relate it to you without such a needless and uninteresting preparation."

A Sketch of the Life of a BEAUTY.

"Cecilia's father was a gentleman of considerable landed property in a western county of this kingdom; and her mother the sister of an Irish peer, of modern creation.—They had, at a very early period, sought the bands of Hymen, where many others have gone to seek them, on the other side of the Tweed; and, considering the general consequences of runaway marriages, had lived in tolerable cordiality and good

humour with each other.—They had two children; a son, who having the promise of good parts, was educated by the father, to politics and party, with a view of getting a peerage for his family;—and a daughter, who having the promise of great beauty, was educated by the mother, with a view of getting a peer for her husband. But as it was the object of the former to elevate his rank, and, of course, to keep his estate undiminished by a daughter's fortune, it became the sole study of the latter to make her daughter so rich in charms and accomplishments, as to render a marriage portion wholly unnecessary.—She was, therefore, educated by her affectionate parent upon the same principles that a dealer employs in training an horse for sale.

“ Cecilia, as she grew up, more than answered her mother's expectation;—nature, as if she wished to favour the views of the parents, had lavished her choicest bounties

bounties on the form and features of their daughter.—She was lovely beyond any description,—and her education had but one object, which was, to qualify her to display her various perfections by the illustrating aid of accomplishments and manners.

“ So well, indeed, had the young lady been instructed,—and so ready had she proved to receive instruction, that before she had attained her seventeenth year, she knew, with the most accurate precision, when to smile, and when to frown,—with whom she was to practise reserve, or to whom she was to pay attentions,—at what moment she was to be enclosed with dignity, and the precise occasion when she was to dissolve in condescension.—The highly decorated dress for a ball, or the simple *négligé* for a breakfast table: the Amazonian habit for the morning, or the robe of careless arrangement for the evening, with every intermediate form of toi-

lette embellishment, were understood by her, in all their varieties and effects. To every act and motion she knew how, on the instant, to give the appropriate grace; nor did she ever enter a room, but she immediately discovered, with all the skill of a painter, where to place the lovely portrait of herself.

“It is almost unnecessary to inform you, that so charming a creature, in the first bloom of youth, and enriched with every accomplishment, and I might add, every art of her sex, attracted the eye of admiration wherever she appeared. — Cecilia had lovers in plenty, — and almost as many proposals of marriage as lovers; — but though several of them were such as would not have been refused on general principles; yet as they all, more or less, implied an expectation of such a fortune as might reasonably be demanded from a man of her father’s situation and property, they had a tendency rather unfavourable to

to the family object of marrying her without any fortune at all.

“ But as the declaration of such an intention, when formally made, though it might not have checked some of the more passionate of her admirers, would have given a very painful wound to the young lady’s consequence, as well as to the pride of her family, another mode was adopted for the attainment of their favourite object, which, though of a much less honourable nature, as it was only known to the parties concerned, would save their feelings the mortification that might otherwise have arisen from the observations and opinions of the world.

“ This admirable plot was nothing less than to encourage the passion of a young nobleman, the heir of a great title and large fortune, who was on duty with a regiment of militia in the neighbourhood.— The young lord was violently enamoured,

—and the young lady, acting under maternal instructions,—did nothing, as you may be assured, to lessen the ardour of his attachment ;—and as he feared to inform his father of the situation of his heart,—and she dared not communicate to her mother the state of her mind,—there was but one way open to their mutual happiness ;—and that way led to Scotland,—where they were married.—The young lady in a short time returned with her young lord, to her father's house ;—who, after some assumed awkwardnesses on his part,—and a great deal of sincere interposition on the part of her mother,—suffered his consent to be obtained, that the young people should remain with him till Lord ——— was disposed,—as he had every reason to believe would very soon be the case,—to be reconciled to this unexpected marriage.

“ The old peer, at first, felt an immoderate degree of indignation at the conduct of his son ;—but as he was his only child,—
and

and the last stock of an ancient and honourable family,—he soon began to cool in his resentment ;—and as the lady who had become his daughter, was in a rank of life by no means unfuitable to his own,—he began, in a very few days after he had received the intelligence of his son's marriage, to feel an inclination to be reconciled to the young people ;—and the friends whom he consulted on the occasion, happening, very fortunately for all parties, to be persons of understanding,—they advised him in the most urgent manner, to indulge the generous sentiment.

“ Their good counsels being in perfect concord with his good dispositions,—he declared his intention to be governed by them ;—and accordingly dispatched a messenger, to invite his son to return home, and bring his bride along with him.—This pleasing command was obeyed with all the haste of extreme satisfaction ;—and Cecilia was instructed how to act, in order to win

a father, as she had gained an husband.—She was fully equal to the task assigned her;—and every arrangement of person and behaviour was studiously contrived and considered, in order to produce the effect of cordial reconciliation.

“ The old nobleman had been a man of gallantry in his youth, and retained the decent remains of his early dispositions to the present period of his life.—But though paternal affection, as well as his natural pride, had been very much affected by what he termed a very unfriendly, as well as undutiful, conduct in his son; he had declared, again and again, to his chaplain, over their evening wine,—that if the unlucky, hypocritical rogue had, after all, married a fine girl, as he had reason to hope, from his having run away with her, he would not meet him with a sour look: But, he would add, if the silly rascal had brought an ugly minx into the family, he himself, though he was within a month of threescore,

threescore, would marry the first handsome woman who would have him, to save the honour of his name.

“ Such was the temper of his mind, when, as he was looking from the library window into his park, he saw the chaise approaching, whose arrival was to bring joy or disappointment along with it.— He, therefore, retired in a state of uncommon agitation, to the drawing-room; and before he could compose himself into that dignity of appearance which he conceived to be suitable to the occasion, the loveliest creature he had ever beheld was at his feet; and, as she kissed his hand, declared she would never rise from that posture till he had accepted the promised duty of her life, as an atonement for one breach of it, committed by her husband;—there she resolved to remain till she had reconciled the best son to the most honoured father.

“ The old peer, who thought he saw an angel on her knees before him, was some time before he recovered from the contending feelings of joy and astonishment; at length he caught her in his arms, and called her his charming daughter :— He then embraced his son,—thanked him in the warmest terms of acknowledgment for adding so much beauty to his family, and declared that hour to be the happiest of his life.—He danced about the room as if he himself had been the enchanted bridegroom; and the lovely object of all his joy was obliged to employ her prevailing persuasions to moderate those transports, which, besides the ridiculous appearance they assumed, were at last too much for his strength, and began to alarm them, from the very violent agitation of his spirits which they occasioned.

“ The following day he was more calm, but not less happy; and Cecilia, who did not neglect those attentions which she thought

thought necessary to secure her future objects,—took an opportunity, in answer to some of his complimentary congratulations, to beg his kind permission to dispatch a messenger to inform her father and mother of his parental favour, and to put an end to the painful suspense of their happiness, by assuring them of the consummate state of her own. This request was no sooner made, than an express was sent to invite them, in the most pressing manner, to come and see their daughter at a place where she was mistress of all: and they were no sooner arrived, than Lord ——— desired Cecilia to acquaint her father, that he had already given instructions to his lawyer to prepare settlements equal to her merit and his rank; and that, as a proof of the entire satisfaction he felt in his son's choice, he should consider it as a personal affront, if the least hint was given of adding a marriage portion to the invaluable treasure she already possessed in herself.

“ Thus

“ Thus was every object attained to which Cecilia’s beauty had been directed. In her present elevated situation she enjoyed all the happiness that could be derived from fortunate beauty. The assiduous attentions of an amiable husband,—the lavish affection of a doting father,—the splendour of a great fortune, and the gaze of fond admiration wherever she went,—all contributed to her satisfaction.—But amidst these singular and various advantages, Cecilia had but one object of regard,—and that was herself.—She esteemed her husband,—and she felt something like gratitude to her father-in-law; but her attentions and interests were to the figure which her glass reflected when she stood before it.—For when the old Lord died, she did not shed a tear;—and when, about two years after, she lost her husband, her mind was principally occupied in considering how the weeds of widowhood would become her. It is true she wore the appearance of sorrow on the occasion,—and they

they who saw the tears on her cheeks, placed them to the account of tender affection, and conjugal regret;—but those sentiments had no concern in unlocking the sources of her grief.—She wept at nothing more than the mortifying reflection, that the tyranny of custom would hide her for a certain number of months from the world, and that the period of her mourning, was so much precious time lost to those enjoyments which constituted the happiness of her life. Nor did the widowed Countess reason in opposition to those principles which had hitherto governed all her thoughts and actions.

“ She was not twenty-five,—and every trait of personal beauty continued its unimpaired lustre. She possessed high rank,—a jointure of three thousand pounds a year,—and other flattering advantages of fortune and luxury.—She did not think more highly of her situation than it deserved, when she imagined that, admired

as she hitherto had been, in the character of a wife, she should be adored in her present free and unshackled state; Nor were her expectations very unreasonable, that, being once again a single woman, with every advantage and attraction of that condition, she should be followed and sought in marriage by the first men in the kingdom; and that, being in a state of superior independence, she might indulge in all the glory of female dominion, till satiated with its pleasures, she should chuse to command the completion of her vanity, by retiring to the calm dignity of a ducal coronet."

"The picture is animated," said Don Cleofas, "and female vanity comes forward with no common effect from your canvas:—as it is a powerful engine of your art, it is also a favourite subject of your eloquence." "Be that as it may," answered the Demon, "you, I am sure, will acknowledge, that in those descriptions
I of

of the human heart which I have so often given you, I never failed to do equal justice to the virtues, as well as the failings of either sex.—I shall, therefore, with your Lordship's permission, continue my important and interesting story.

“ You will not wonder,” continued Asmodeus, “ that with such dispositions, and in such expectations, as I have described our heroine to possess, she should sicken at the tedious, unmeaning, and senseless decencies of fashionable widowhood. But time is continually passing on in one continual pace, which, though it cannot be shortened by the happy, nor quickened by the wretched, will not fail, in its due course, to put an end to the joys of the one and the sorrows of the other.—The impatient period, therefore, at length arrived, when the beauteous widow came forward from behind the cloud that had, for some time, obscured her from the public eye ; and,—which you might not, perhaps,

perhaps, expect to hear,—every dream of her vanity was fulfilled. All the homage which could flatter beauty, was paid to her charms,—and all the pleasure that could result from the gratifications of the most boundless vanity, she fully enjoyed:—And, to conclude the whole, when the repetition of these various sweets palled upon her mind, a ducal coronet was laid at her feet, and by an hand that would confer the highest honour even on her acceptance.”

“ I have,” interrupted the Count, “ followed this alluring beauty, step by step, through the delightful path which an enamoured fortune has appeared to conduct her, to the present summit of her gratified ambition.—And now, my disappointment will be inexpressibly pleasing to me, if I should not find that some swinging misfortune is prepared to overtake her. I am really alarmed at the idea of looking forward, least I should behold this brilliant
lunary,

luminary, which gave so much lustre to the world of fashion, obscured by some impenetrable cloud of adversity, or setting for ever in the grave."

"It is not for me," said the Demon, "to invent stories for the amusement of your fancy, but to relate facts for the instruction of your mind; and if your tender apprehensions are so much alarmed, as to render it offensive to your delicate sensations, for me to continue the sequel of Cecilia's history, we will, if you please, leave the fair lady in the splendid position to which my narrative has conducted her, and pass on to some other object."

"I feel the impertinence of my interruption," replied Don Cleofas; "and most humbly intreat your worship to continue your relation; for, after all, I am not without a small propensity to peep behind those *jalousies*, and see whether this paragon of beauty has not received
some

some embellishments from the colouring of your eloquence."

"I should treat you as you deserve, my good friend," answered Asmodeus, "if I were to punish your interruptions, by refusing to indulge your curiosity with any further information concerning the object of your present attention;—but perhaps I shall do it more effectually, by an assurance, that if I were to introduce you into Cecilia's chamber, you would not be able form a right judgment of the truth or falsehood of my descriptions;—for, though by no means despoiled of every charm, she, alas! is no longer that cunning pattern of excelling beauty which I have hitherto so warmly, and, indeed, so justly represented her to be."

"I have been trembling," said the Count, "for some time, with the apprehension of this unwelcome intelligence;—and my mind has foreboded the cruel reverse

verse which you are about to reveal to me. —To such a woman, the loss of life must stand in no comparison with the loss of beauty;—and I do honestly declare, that it would not touch my feelings so deeply, to see the escutcheons on her hearse—as to hear you tell of the disfigurement of her person.”

“ If your ardent zeal in behalf of beauty,” replied the Demon, “ will permit me to proceed,—I shall inform you, that when Cecilia was a child, an eruptive disorder was mistaken, by a country apothecary,—as it has sometimes been by a London physician,—for the small-pox;—and her parents were so delighted at her recovery from such an alarming disease, without any of those unpleasant effects which are sometimes produced by it, that they gave a very elegant entertainment to the neighbourhood on the joyful occasion.

“ Cecilia,

“ Cecilia, therefore, being fully persuaded that she had nothing to fear from a disorder which is such a declared foe to beauty,—did not hesitate to pay a visit to one of her female friends who was just recovering from this invidious malady,—and whose face, a general report had declared to have been very unhandsomely treated by it.—This young lady, though she was marked, and very deservedly, in the class of fashionable fine persons,—was by no means formed to be a competitor for public admiration with Cecilia,—nevertheless she possessed certain qualifications of mind and manners, which, by occasionally attracting the notice, and receiving the admiration of that description of people called men of understanding,—had awakened a secret jealousy in the bosom of the superior beauty.—The visit, therefore, of the latter, must, I fear, be attributed to that interested curiosity, of whatever kind you may suppose it to be, which may be most naturally imagined to arise in the breast

breast of a rival on such an occasion.—But, be that as it may, the consequences which proceeded from it were, though in different degrees, of the most mortifying nature;—for she found her sick friend, in direct contradiction to common report, without any injury to her countenance, but such as time would speedily remove;—and, which proved a very unexpected misfortune indeed, she herself caught the infection;—the disease quickly followed,—and has left those marks of its destructive power on her beauty, which time will never efface.

“ You,” continued Asmodeus, “ who, with the true spirit of knight errantry, feel so much for beauty in distress,—and whose sensations are so alive to female misfortune,—will conceive better than I can describe, Cecilia’s distressing apprehensions, when she discovered the real state of her situation,—which, as long as possible, was prudently concealed from her.—You may
equally

equally imagine the emotions of her despair, when she reflected, that by the menacing ravages of her disease, the elevating influence which had gained all the principal objects of her past life, and was to secure those on which she rested the importance of every future period of it, would be so much diminished, if not wholly at an end,—that the eye, from which envy had darted its half-admiring beams towards her superior charms, would now scarce deign, perhaps, to regard her with an humbling look of assumed pity ;—and that she must either seclude herself entirely from the world,—or enter into it to struggle with the most afflicting and poignant mortifications.—At present she has adopted the plan of retirement ;—and, to disguise her appearance from the very few friends she admits to her society,—as well as to hide it as much as possible from herself,—she lives in a darkened room,—sits with her back towards the very little light that is admitted through the blinds which obscure the windows,

windows,—has banished the looking-glass from her presence,—and passes her time in the deep melancholy of hopeless dejection.

“ But while her misfortunes,—for I will acknowledge that a sudden, accidental diminution of beauty, in any degree, to be a proportionate misfortune to such a woman,—awaken your pity,—her conduct under it is by no means calculated to justify the commiserating sentiments of a reflecting mind. —Though her features have suffered a change,—they are by no means disfigured. If she had never possessed more charms than she displays even at this moment, she would have been very unreasonable not to have been satisfied with her present claim to admiration. —Her countenance has not lost all its attractions,—and her form has received no injury;—but her original beauty has suffered a diminution, and her happiness therefore is entirely blasted.—The nobleman whose offer of

marriage had been accepted by her, declared, as he stood by her bed, in the most disfiguring stage of her disorder, that no ravages its utmost malignity could commit on her charms, would cause the slightest change in his affection:—He is now anxious to fulfil his promise, and would see no alteration in her beauty,—at least to occasion any diminution of his sentiments towards her,—if she would admit him to give that honourable and sincere assurance;—but she will not receive him into her presence, nor hear of his entreaties to be received by her.—She is firmly persuaded, that his former declarations were those of a generous compassion,—and that he would now start with horror, if his humanity did not restrain him, at the sight of her;—or, at least, retreat with coldness, from the shocking spectacle of her ravaged beauty.

“ With these sentiments, that no persuasions can change,—and not daring to
consult

consult her mirror, which, though it might afford her some mortification, would by no means provoke her despair,—she pursues such a conduct as will shortly terminate in the grave;—and prove an example of the proverb,—that a young woman, on her death-bed, is more alarmed for the loss of her beauty, than her life.”

“My fears are fulfilled,” said the Count. “I expected that all this fair, uninterrupted career of good fortune would end in some dire mishap.—There is one thing, however, great in her determination;—she is an heroine in her way; for she will live a beauty,—or she will live no more.”

“But to turn your thoughts,” interrupted the Demon, “from this last scene of capricious, silly vanity,—which, after all, I perceive, occasions a sadness at your heart,—I shall beg of you to fix your regard on the house with Venetian window-blinds, where you will see an old man, and

a gentleman sitting by his bed-side, whose rank is discoverable by the star on his breast.—The laatter is consoling his poor friend with some detached hints on the very comfortable, opiate doctrine of annihilation:—But that is an idea, which men at their last hour are not always disposed to adopt, even when it might be their interest that it should be realized.—This dying man thinks repentance a better thing;—and deceives himself into an opinion of his efficacious practice of it, by passing over a whole life of libertinism and infidelity,—and reserving all his contrition for the unkindness with which he treated his father, who died fifty years ago.

“A little farther, on the same side of the way,” continued Asmodeus, “there is another singular scene of a dying pillow.—It is, however, of a very different nature from that which we have just considered:—It is an act of conscientious friendship, from a mind naturally superstitious,

stitious, and, in its decaying state, is clinging to little things.—If your eye takes the line of upper windows, it will, in a few moments, arrive at a chamber, where an amiable looking man is sitting on a bed,—which is a death-bed,—with his hand locked in that of the person in it;—nor, were you to guess for the rest of your life,—which I trust will be lengthened through many years of happiness,—would you approach the subject of their conversation.—You must know then, that the one is a painter of great eminence, and the other a man of great literary character, who has just obtained a faithful promise of compliance with his last and most urgent request from his friend,—who is as astonished to hear, as you will be to be informed, that it is nothing more or less than that he will never again employ his pencil on a Sunday.”

“ I presume,” said the Count, “ that the dying counsellor supposes the greatest,

or perhaps the only defect of his surviving friend's character to be, such a love of his art, as to intrude it upon the more serious occupation of the sabbath."

"And if that were the case," replied the Demon, "no wise man can think that it deserved the reproachful exhortation of a dying hour.—But so it is; and your Lordship must be already pretty well convinced how often, in the language of a poet of this country,

Life's last scene supplies

Fears of the brave, and follies of the wise.

"It is very common," observed Don Cleofas, "to talk ourselves, and to hear others harangue on the varieties of life;—but it appears to me, as if its last hour underwent as many changes as any of those which precede it."

"It

“ It is even so,” replied the Demon ;
“ for as the human features, though formed for the same purposes,—possess some shades of difference in the most resembling countenances, so every part of life has its distinct varieties, according to the qualities and situation of men ;—and perhaps no feature of life,—for it may well be described by that name,—is subject to more variety than the last scene of it.—Nor shall I hesitate to indulge you with another example, by requesting you to give your attention to the attic story of a large house that forms the corner of a square.

“ What you may hereafter please to discover to me, I know not,” said the Count, “ but at present, I see nothing there like the end of life,—unless an old gentleman should be considered by you as an object which may naturally lead to the consideration of it.—He has, however, no appearance of immediate dissolution,—on the contrary, I should consider him rather

as an hearty man of his years.—He is actually writing without spectacles, and bears no marks of debility or decay, that is evident, at least, to my perception.”

“He is himself, however,” answered Asmodeus, “not without pretty strong suspicions that he has but a short time to live.—He has, indeed, felt such a peculiar change in himself, within the last twenty-four hours, as to give him very just cause to apprehend that the struggle he has maintained with time, for the last two years, is on the point of being decided against him.”

“Then I presume,” said Don Cleofas, “it is that melancholy instrument called a last will and testament, which he is now transcribing with so much haste.”

“There again,” observed the Devil, “the exhaustless variety of the scene baffles your penetration.—It is a letter to a friend, who

who happens to be particularly acquainted with the various circumstances of his varying life;—and the object of this last epistle is, after mentioning the apprehensions he entertains of his approaching death,—to request, as the last desire of his life,—that the gentleman to whom it is addressed,—will do justice to his name and character, when the worthy man himself shall be no more.

“ Nor is it an anxiety that misbecomes him.—He is a gentleman who, in early life, had the fairest promise of continuing prosperity;—whose career was for many years splendid;—whose friendship to individuals was continual;—whose services to his country were uncommonly meritorious;—and who closes a long life in neglect and dependence.—Of his errors, it may with truth be said, that they were the exuberance of his good qualities, rather than the offspring of any habitual depravities;—and that his faults were rather the fruits of

his misfortunes, than the defects of his nature.—Hence it is, that the pardonable vanity which has been a principal and governing feature of his character throughout life,— accompanies him to the end of it.—He is now agitated with the most anxious desire that the unsuspected pen of friendship may do justice to his memory, even when his ear will be closed, and he can no longer hear the voice of censure or of praise.—As I see you appear affected at the recital, you may comfort yourself with the assurance that the request which this poor gentleman is now writing, will be answered by the most solemn engagement to fulfil it,—and that he will die in peace.”

“ There is something so interesting in his appearance,” said Don Cleofas, “ and from the hints you have communicated, my curiosity is so awakened to his history, that I should be much obliged, if it occurs to your memory, to favour me, hereafter, with that account of him and his life,
which

which his friend, who knows so much of both, will communicate to the world."

"As your frame of mind is suited to the occasion," replied the Demon, "I will exercise my powers of anticipation, and present it to you in the very words in which it will be shortly written."—The Count expressed his gratitude, and the Devil upon Two Sticks proceeded as follows :

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF

V—— M——, Esq.

Valentine Morris

"They who remember this gentleman when he was improving the beauties and exercising the hospitality of his beautiful residence in the county of — —, will surely heave a sigh at the reflection, that he breathed his last at a distance from, and no longer in the possession of it.—Nor can it

H 6

fail

fail to heighten the regret of humanity, when it is known, that the latter days of a man, the greater part of whose life, and almost the whole of whose fortune, was exhausted in aggrandizing the scenes of inanimate nature, and refining on the satisfactions of social life,—should be passed in neglect, and under oppression,—in discouragement and dependence.

“ That his misfortunes were, in some measure, the offspring of his imprudence,—or, in other words, that by an inconsiderate desire to make others happy, he at last rendered himself extremely wretched,—is a circumstance that those who loved him best must be content to acknowledge and lament.

“ Mr. M—— inherited his ——shire estate, which was upwards of a thousand pounds *per annum*, with a very large property in Antigua.—His income may, therefore, be supposed to have been sufficient

cient for all the general purposes of elegant life,—but it did not prove sufficient for him. — In improving the natural beauties of his fine place, he refused no expence,—and in rendering it universally acceptable to the numerous friends, and crowds of strangers by whom it was visited,—he employed an hospitality which was bounteous and splendid beyond example.—Persons of every rank were conducted, with all possible convenience, and the most respectful attention, through the long circuit of his terrestrial paradise, and had nothing to pay when they came to the end of it.—Mr. M—— was the first who abolished the odious tax, which some years ago was levied by servants on the visitors of their masters.—Thus he lived for many years, in a place which was more visited than any private house in the kingdom,—and was visited by none who did not bear away with them a grateful esteem for the owner of it.

“ It

“ It will not be necessary to dwell upon the uncertain nature of West India estates, as it is a circumstance so universally known.—It may be sufficient to relate, that, from a very expensive mode of life in England, and an untoward succession of dry summers in Antigua, Mr. M—— at length found himself in such an embarrassed situation, as to render it expedient for him to offer his English estate to sale;—and a nobleman of great Eastern wealth, had consented to give fifty-two thousand pounds, as the purchase of it,—when he was suddenly appointed by the East India Company, to return once more to India, in order to settle the disorders, which at that time disturbed the administration of the Oriental possessions of the British empire.

“ Such an unexpected circumstance prevented, as may be supposed, any further progress in the proposed sale;—and, though many successive and considerable offers
were

were made for the purchase of the property in question,—as they, none of them, reached the price which had been set upon it,—Mr. M—— still continued, though on somewhat of a more confined scale, to preserve the elegant and hospitable character of the place.

“ The county in which his estate was situated, was very greatly indebted to him.—Among many other acts of great public utility,—with a most indefatigable zeal, and at a very considerable expence, he procured, by his own personal interest and exertions, a bill to be passed in Parliament, which involved in it near three hundred miles of turnpike-road in that county;—by which act, instead of almost impassable ways,—every principal town found itself in possession of a turnpike communication with the other principal towns of the county, and with the navigation of one of the first navigable rivers in the kingdom.

“ Hence

“ Hence it was, that on a vacancy in the Parliamentary representation of —shire, he was persuaded to offer himself as a candidate on the occasion :—All that personal popularity could do, it did for him ;—but being most zealously opposed by many of the old established interests and commanding properties of the county, —and being supported in a very luke-warm and doubtful manner, by the leading powers of his own party,—he failed in obtaining the honour he so well deserved ;—and the expences of this election, with some very unpleasant circumstances which attended the loss of it, gave the final blow to what remained of his former prosperity.

“ Still, however, he would have been contented to live on his estate, in humility and retirement,—and satisfied with the pride of his place, would have given up all pride of his own, if he had not been controlled by an influence he had, unfortunately, never been able to resist ;—

to

to which the goodness of his heart alone impelled him to yield,—and which an humane delicacy, and innate generosity of mind, would never suffer him to explain.

“ He was therefore under the mortifying necessity of bidding adieu to a spot, which was justly considered as the first in point of picturesque beauty, in a kingdom which abounds so much in it;—and soon after he was appointed Lieutenant Governor of the Island of St. Vincent, then a dependency on the Island of Grenada;—and when, in the course of about four years, the former island was erected into a separate government, his Majesty, with every mark of gracious approbation of his conduct in a subordinate capacity, was pleased to appoint Mr. M—— the Governor of it.

“ Such an appointment was not only suitable to his active disposition,—but adapted to his particular interests,—as it placed

placed him in the vicinity of his West-India property,—and in a situation, as he might reasonably expect, which would enable him to discharge the incumbrances on it;—but, alas, his future days seem to have been devoted to misfortune and disappointment.

“ At this time the Island of St. Vincent had not been long subject to the British crown;—most of the principal inhabitants retained a decided partiality for their former masters; and the troubles of North America wore a very serious aspect. Mr. M—— was, therefore, forbidden by his Majesty’s ministers, to urge the payment of those duties by which his English salary was to be provided, lest his Majesty should, on the refusal of it, be necessarily engaged in a dispute with the Assembly; and to forward the views of Government at home, with a patriotic zeal, of rare example, he voluntarily waved the making any demand of a salary from the Colony

Colony, the first grant a Governor is authorized to require; so that, in fact, his own noble spirit made him a Governor, without any salary at all.—In short, he derived no emoluments whatever from his situation,—but certain grants of uncultivated lands, and the casual fees of his office, which his enlarged notions of justice, and the advancement of the public service, had rendered far less than those which are usually required by persons in his capacity, in the other islands; so that this zealous, public-spirited, worthy man, found himself obliged,—in order to support the dignity of his office, to discharge the debts of Government, and to carry on the necessary business of the island,—to lay additional burthens on his private property, instead of diminishing the weight that already oppressed it, by the emoluments of his official station.

“ It is not an easy thing to give a picture of circumstances more unpleasant in them-

themselves, and more alarming in a view of their natural consequences, than those in which this amiable man was at this time involved. The uncultivated parts of the island were inhabited by numerous tribes of hostile Charibs; and the cultivated parts were possessed by persons, the greater part of whom were secret enemies to the British Government. Hence it arose, that, in exercising the duties of his commission, he was not only thwarted in secret, but opposed in public; while he was so far from receiving any support from home, that his official letters were unanswered; his information, which the ministers of the period acknowledged to be the best they received from that quarter, during the war, was unnoticed;—his complaints remained unredressed; and the bills drawn on Government, for the necessary expenditure and support of the island, came back protested, without any reason assigned, by the American secretary, for such extraordinary and unaccountable conduct,

conduct,—without a single line of instruction, reproof, or prohibition.

“ Such, however, was the temper of this singular man, that nothing could discourage him from discharging his duty.—Still a romantic patriotism continued to govern all his actions; and when no one could be found to saw a plank on the credit of Great Britain, he did not hesitate to engage his personal security, in order to carry on the public service;—and to satisfy debts so contracted for public services, which every inhabitant of the island knew to be essentially necessary to the welfare and preservation of it, his whole property there, incredible as it may appear, was afterwards taken in execution, and sold at a public auction.

“ When the island was attacked by the French, though he scarcely possessed any means whatever of defence, either in troops, arms, or ammunition,—so little attention

tention had been paid at home to this colony,—and though he was shamefully thwarted even in the employment of them, such as they were,—he conducted himself on the occasion with that manly spirit and resolution, which procured him a capitulation equally favourable with those islands which possessed the power of making their capture a scene of blood and slaughter. He, nevertheless, for some time, lay under the imputation of neglect or ignorance of duty, in the loss of the island; till a board of general officers, obtained by his personal solicitation of the King, to examine into the business, declared his official conduct to have been that of a brave and faithful servant of his country.

“ On his return to England, he demanded justice of administration,—and justice was promised;—but the delays of office intervened,—new administrations succeeded, and new delays were, of course, created;

created; till the impatient spirit of rapacious creditors completed his misfortunes by consigning him to a prison.

“ The principal of these were the holders of bills drawn on Government for services performed in the West Indies, and which have since been allowed and paid; and the mortgagees of an estate in Antigua, who had been for some time in the actual possession and receipt of the estate itself, whose value was so superior to any demands that could be made upon it, and whose profits were annually diminishing them,—that language has not a term of disgrace that will sufficiently describe the obduracy of those men, who could avail themselves of law chicanery, to enhance their security, already so well established, by the confinement of Mr. M——’s person in a gaol.

“ Such cruel and disgraceful oppression, which he had not the pecuniary means

means to resist,—kept this persecuted man within the walls of a prison, during four long tedious years; and though, from the soothing kindness of affectionate family connections, he did not want such comforts as a prison could afford,—how few, alas, were there, of all the numerous friends of his better days, who knocked at the prison door, to enquire what those means were that remained for his support, or if he wanted any comfort which they could afford him.

“ In the mean time one of his estates in Antigua was sold by his creditors for half its value,—and his beautiful property in England, to which no description is adequate, was forced to sale for one half of the sum which he had been formerly offered for it, and even less than had been expended, by the skill and taste of its late owner, in the improvement of it:—Another circumstance of depressing mortification, which might have been prevented had Mr.

M—

M—— received only an inconsiderable part of that balance which was due to him from the justice of Government.

“ About three years ago he obtained his liberty,—and the present minister was disposed to redeem the dilatory spirit and ruinous injustice of former administrations, in his favour;—but still the press of public business interfered, and fresh circumstances of delay interposed, till this injured gentleman had resigned all his claims on this world to the power of the grave.

“ That he was a man of superior taste, and the most winning urbanity of manners, all who knew him, well know; and his natural capacity, if it was not in the first rank, was very far from being of an inferior class;—but among his misfortunes, for so it must be considered, at least in his relation to this world, he possessed that goodness of heart to the last, which led him to judge of mankind, not

from what he had found among them, but from what he felt in himself.

“ The leading feature of his character was a zeal which approached to Quixotism, —whether it was employed in the service of his country, his friend, or the distressed. He has, indeed, been frequently represented as too much under the influence of an ostentatious spirit,—and the generosity, the urbanity, and the charities of his life, have been often imputed to that principle ;—but by whom ? by those who envied his prosperity, and sought to frame an excuse for their ingratitude in his adversity. What other vanity governed his actions, than that which is the main-spring of human excellence, I know not ; but this I know, and will repeat,—that he was a most faithful and zealous servant of his country,—that he possessed an enlarged capacity for friendship,—that he never failed to assist distress, when he could,—and that oftentimes he did assist it, when he ought not.

not. He shared his good things in the days of his better fortune, with the friends of his prosperity,—and he divided the pittance that remained in the hour of his distress, with the companions of his adversity.

“ With his virtues he had his failings, which disaster might encrease, and the insolent rigour of affected virtue may condemn.—That his passions might sometimes overcome his morality,—and that the benevolence of his heart might too often extinguish his prudence, are circumstances which it is the duty of friendship to lament:—but the best of us are the children of infirmity,—and the virtues of Mr. M—— were sufficient, in the opinion of those who knew him best, to counterbalance all his errors.

“ Such was this amiable, unhappy, and persecuted man;—and he is, at length, gone to give an account of himself to that

Being, of whom he will have no reason to be afraid.

“ From his life may be drawn this salutary instruction, that there is no error more fatal to human happiness, than to be confident, that, in the hour of misfortune, we shall receive protection from the justice, or relief from the gratitude, of the world.”

“ Such a picture of life,” said Don Cleofas, “ makes me look with the most tranquil composure on the bed of death; and so far from pitying the worthy man whose history has just awakened every feeling of my heart, I could rejoice rather to think that he is at the end of a journey, in which pain and disappointment have so long been the companions of his way.”

“ And yet, with all your philosophy,” answered the Demon, “ I think you will
not

not consider that to be happiness which is going on in the large house before which you may see the alarming appearance of five medical chariots.—Three physicians, an accoucheur, and an apothecary, are, at this instant, not in the act of consultation concerning their patient, who is now in labour, but of remonstrance with her Lord,—and the case is as extraordinary and affecting as ever claimed their or your attention.

“ This nobleman,—whose fortune is large, whose title is antient, and who hates the next heir of both, though he is his brother,—is so anxious to have a son, that, after every lying-in of his lady, who, unfortunately for her, has hitherto brought him only female children, he has treated her in such a manner, for this innocent offence against his wishes, as to endanger her life at the time, and to weaken, very considerably, the powers of her constitution for the rest of her days.

Lord Buckingham here

“The business of these physical people, therefore, is an act of real humanity, as well as of professional duty;—and it is no less than to inform the noble Lord, that if he continues his usual passionate proceedings, in case nature should think proper to make him the father of another daughter, he will certainly occasion the death of its mother.

“The doctors, having discharged this important article of their duty, and obtained from his Lordship the most solemn assurance that he will bear his disappointment, if the event should prove to be so, with the most unrepachable patience,—will proceed to their attendance on the lady, at the critical moment when nature, who is not governed by the imperious temper of fathers, or the most affecting wishes of mothers, has added to the number of her daughters. On being informed of the sex of the child, the ap-
pre-

prehenſions that ſhe ſhall receive the ſame cruel treatment which ſhe has hitherto ſuffered, in ſimilar circumſtances, will have ſuch an effect upon her mind and ſpirits, as to place her beyond the reach of medical aid, and will ſoon give her Lord an opportunity to find another wife, if he can, who will bring him ſons as well as daughters.”

“ But will not ſuch a conduct,” ſaid the Count, “ be conſidered by the laws of this enlightened country, as ſomething like a crime called murder ? ” — “ By no means,” answered the Demon ; “ the criminal intent, in this particular inſtance, might not exiſt,—and if it did, could not be made to appear ; and without a proof of ſuch intention, or ſome overt act which the law can fairly determine to mark it, no crime of that, or indeed any other kind, can legally be brought to juſtice.”

“ In the court of Heaven, however,” replied Don Cleofas, “ matters surely will be ordered otherwise; for there the real motives of the heart are known, and offences will be punished, which the arm of human justice cannot reach, and actions rewarded, which the short-sighted power of human laws have deemed it right to punish.”

“ Your Lordship,” said the Devil upon Two Sticks, in his sarcastic way, “ has, at present, rather the advantage of me.— You have really got into a country that does not come within the circle of my geography; nor have I the least acquaintance with the laws, manners, or language of its inhabitants;—I must beg the favour of you, therefore, if you wish to have the pleasure of my agreeable society, to continue that route where it will be in my power to have the honour of attending upon you.

“ You

"You will, I am sure, be so good as to pardon me," replied the Count: "I am not, as you well know, in the habit of taking such flights; and whatever may be my future hopes, my present wishes have no object but your company, and the infinite instruction, as well as pleasure, which I receive from it.—My whole attentions are again at your command.

"I must desire you then to direct them," said Asmodeus, "to the first-floor of a large house, where there is a carriage waiting, and two footmen, in elegant liveries, standing at the door.

"I have implicitly obeyed your worship," replied the Count, "and can see nothing in the room but a table, with a large book open upon it, and the usual appendages of an handsome bed-chamber. Indeed, while I am speaking," added Don Cleofas, "I discover another object of rather a singular appearance, which is, a

gentleman dressed, and his hat on, who is taking a comfortable nap by the bedside."

"It is a very comfortable one, I assure you," observed the Demon; "for, in this world, at least, he will never awake from it.—The good old man has the honour of dying, like one of the Roman Emperors, on a *chaise percée*.—It is a particular circumstance, and will make the fortune of his physician, who accidentally foretold it.

"This gentleman had been, for some time, attended by a medical professor of genius, but whose practice being in opposition to the general mode of the college, had been discouraged by the Galenical body corporate, and was little more than sufficient to his actual maintenance. As the operations were tedious, the patient grew impatient; and, of course, when he determined to change it for other means of relief, discharged the physician who had

had prescribed it.—The doctor, however, endeavoured, by every argument in his power, to prevail on him to continue the regimen in which he was so far advanced;—but finding the obstinacy of his valetudinarian to be impregnable to all his reasonings, he assured him, for his comfort, but merely as expressive of dying suddenly, in some way or other, that he would be found some morning dead upon his *chaise percée*.

“ The worthy gentleman, who considered this opinion as arising from the disappointment of the physician at losing a profitable patient, repeated it, in a jocular manner, to all his acquaintance; till at length the medical prophecy, which was generally made, has been literally fulfilled. The doctor, who knows the world as well as he does physic, will insist, very sensibly, on the specific meaning of his declaration,—his medical acumen will be immediately spread abroad,—and this accidental

figure of speech will occasion his making an eminent figure in his profession.

“ Nothing could be more distant from my expectations,” said Don Cleofas, “ on commencing our circuit of to-day, than that we should meet with any occurrence which would awaken a sensation of mirth or jocularity.—But so it is,—and this is not the first time, within these four hours, in which I could almost have indulged a laugh at a representation of those scenes which produce more grave faces than any other.”

“ And if you will take the reverse of your present position,” said Asmodeus, “ and look into the upper room of a small house immediately beneath us, —you will be witness to part of an exhibition, at which, when I have unfolded the whole of it, you may relax your gravity without the shadow of an impropriety, and laugh as heartily as ever you did in your life

life at the comic representations of the stage.

“ I already perceive,” answered Don Cleofas, “ that a little of your professional aid will be necessary to discover the joke to me ;—for, at present, I see nothing in that miserable chamber, but a dirty yellow bed, with curtains round it,—and an old woman sitting by its side, who is at this moment taking a glass of cordial, as I suppose, to fortify herself in the melancholy business of attending the dying person.”

“ It is very true,” replied Asmodeus, “ that at present you see but a very trifling part of this curious business. — I must therefore undraw the curtain, and inform you, that the woman who is stretched on the bed, has long been a lady of the most easy virtue ;—and for some time past, in order to relieve any very pressing necessity, has made it a practice to dispatch an emissary to some or other of her former gal-

gallants, to inform them that she is no more;—and to request their charitable contributions towards giving her the last provision of a decent burial.—This plan has, hitherto, been very successful;—and, in less than an hour, a donation of twenty pounds, from a noble lord in one of the first offices of state,—who was among the patrons of her better days,—for the purpose of procuring her the melancholy apparel of death, will bring her immediately to life, and awaken her at once to all the lewd festivity of her abandoned situation.—This, however, will be the last of her freaks;—and when she dies in reality,—an event which, from her diseased and profligate life, is at no great distance,—the trick will have been so repeatedly practised, that every application of her surviving companions will be in vain;—and the parish where she lives will have the honour of her interment.”

“ This is a resource,” said the Count,
“ that must have been originally suggested
by

by some ingenious member of your fraternity;—for of all the shifts of distressed prostitution, which, in the time of my youthful pranks, I occasionally witnessed, or were communicated to me, among other instructions of an university education, this stratagem is of the happiest invention.”

“That may be,” answered the Demon; “nevertheless, derogatory soever as it may appear to the talents of my associates,—I am obliged to acknowledge, that, among this race of females, every day produces examples of cunning, dissimulation, treachery, and impudence, which would do honour to the most finished Devil of us all.—However, to bring your mind back to a becoming state of composure, I will introduce you to a scene that will rid you at once of every propensity to merriment;—and where you will behold a most affecting and criminal example of
beauty

beauty murdered by the imprudence of maternal care in preserving it.

“ The hearse which you now see in the street before us with the pale ensigns of death, and whose plumes whiten in the sun,—waits to convey all that remains of youth and beauty to an untimely sepulchre.—Sylvia has scarce seen sixteen summers, and death has already laid his wintry hand upon her.—Nature had not only formed her fair,—she had also established her constitution on that robust foundation of health, which promised her charms to endure beyond the common period of personal attraction.—But, unfortunately, she had a vain and silly mother, who thought the cheeks ruddy bloom to be a vulgar beauty,—and the active exercises which confirm it, to be inconsistent with the delicacy of the female character, and the elegant dignity of superior station. — The poor girl was therefore physicked into paleness, and confined into debility;—and
though

though jealous nature made many powerful struggles to maintain her influence, she was at length obliged to yield to quackery and fashion;—so that this cruelly cherished daughter,—after languishing for several months in a painful state of decay,—has, at the age of sixteen, sunk into the grave,—because, in the conceit of her mother's affectation, her cheeks were too red,—and her spirits too animated for the appearance and decorum of elegant life.

“ Nor have I yet told you the whole of this very affecting story:—for when the unhappy woman's eyes were opened to the consequences of such a continual misapplication of medicine, when her child was well,—she ran at once into the opposite extreme,—and would not suffer her to take the necessary prescriptions of the physician, when she was ill;—so that this infatuated parent will be brought also to a premature period of her own days, by the poignant and bitter reflection, that she has
been

been the weak, inconsiderate, and unnatural instrument of shortening those of her daughter."

"But," exclaimed Don Cleofas, "had this lovely creature no father, whose superior understanding and affectionate resolution would naturally have been exerted to snatch her from the danger of these maternal regulations?—Or if her mother is a widow, was there no friend or relation, whose interposing authority, or commanding counsels, could have prevented this destructive system from proceeding to its present melancholy conclusion?"

"She has a father," answered the Demon, "a man of acknowledged talents and eminent character;—but who, like many other men of that class, is so infatuated to a silly woman, as to see reason in her folly,—sense in her weakness,—and elegance in her affectation;—and who, having taken the
entire

entire education of a favourite son upon himself,—left the government of his daughter to the sole, uninterrupted authority of her mother.—The physician of the family had, indeed, mentioned, more than once, his sincere apprehensions concerning the imposed habits of Sylvia's life;—but those friendly hints were unfortunately considered as the offspring of professional interest, and treated with a negligence which they by no means deserved.

“ This confiding husband does not in the least suspect the real cause of his parental misfortune;—but looks to the disorder of which his daughter died as the sole and natural cause of her death;—and so far is he from suspecting the afflicted mother's conduct as in any degree contributory to this melancholy event, that he is at this moment endeavouring to sustain her into resignation, by the fruitless consolations of reason and religion.

“ In

“ In vain he tells her that their child has escaped the treacheries and malice of a wicked world;—that she has gained the harbour without encountering either storm or tempest,—and that she has risen from the banquet before she was surfeited. But the disconsolate mother bears a reproach in her bosom which baffles all comfort, and will soon bear her to the company of her lamented child; and it will be on her death-bed alone, that the husband and the father will be informed of the fatal error which deprives him of a wife and of a child.”

“ I have observed,” said Don Cleofas, “ throughout the whole of my pregrination with you, through this metropolis, that, even among the most sensible and enlightened mothers, personal appearance and exterior qualifications, possess a decided pre-eminence in the prescribed duties of female education.—Such an infatuation, however, for it surely deserves no better name,

name, is by no means consistent with the high character which you have, at times, thought proper to give me of the women of this country; and if it continues to encrease, your mischievous plan of reducing the present mass of female virtue in this favoured island, will, as the young people grow up, lose many of its obstructions and much of its difficulty."

"Your observations, my good friend," answered the Demon, "on this subject,—which I am most willing to acknowledge to be most intimately connected with my professional interests, are perfectly just, according to the measure of your information. But you must be convinced, on considering the exact position of the female character, in the general arrangements of society, particularly in a free country,—that this mode of education, must, in some degree or other, be adopted by the wisest people: all, indeed, that the best mother can do, is to blend the attentions of the toilette and

and the accomplishments of the person, as much as possible, with the culture of the mind ;—to watch with continual attention the progress of them all,—and to give a striking example of their combined application to the purposes of life.

“The first object of every unmarried female’s mind, for we will leave the heart and the passions out of the question, is an husband; from a great variety of causes which it would be needless to mention, it cannot be otherwise.—To attract the flattering notice and approving regards of the other sex, must, therefore, not only be a desirable, but a principal object, on passing the threshold of womanhood.—Beauty cannot fail to command admiration, and exterior qualifications will certainly acquire attentions ; so that by one or the other, or both, the grand business of a girl’s entrance into the world is put in train, and in the most probable chance, at least, of being brought to a speedy conclusion ; while the superior

superior qualities and accomplishments of the mind and understanding, are generally of a much slower progress. The interior beauties of the female character, will have but little influence in the crowd of the world; and, in the circles of particular society, they will alarm many of the other sex, and please but few. They necessarily win their way by imperceptible degrees; they besiege the heart by slow and unseen operations, while highly-finished beauty takes it by storm.

“ I tell you this for your instruction,” continued Asmodeus; “ for you must be so good as to consider that it is not the general custom of this country, as it is in your own, for the old folks to arrange the marriages, and direct the affections of their children. The young people are, in a great measure, left to their own choice, and the qualifications which are the most likely to attract the admiration of the other sex, become, in the natural course of things,

2

a primary

primary object of female education.— At the same time, prudence and modesty are constantly impressed on the youthful mind ; and though the obligations of virtue, as deduced from the considerations of religion, may not be so generally inculcated as they have been, and ought always to be,—yet they still continue to have a considerable influence ; and where they fail or are neglected, family honour, public opinion, and the comforts of reputation, produce very powerful motives to the preservation of female virtue. Indeed the pains taken by mothers to preach to their daughters the necessity of virgin chastity, goes a great way, as I have frequently found, towards maintaining the principle,—when the circumstances of married life have operated rather powerfully against it.

“ But I shall here quit my philosophising strain, to give your excellent heart a pleasure, which, I confess, cannot be
wholly

wholly communicated to mine.—Look, I beg of you, into the chamber of a small house to the right of us, where the upper sashes of the windows are open.”

“ There is, surely, nothing in that room,” replied the Count, “ that can afford me any peculiar satisfaction.—It appears to offer a scene of distress, which may, indeed, interest the best heart, but nothing in it, I should hope, to delight even the worst.—I see a lady, as it were, pale with death, surrounded by weeping attendants, and a surgeon standing by her, who is holding her arm in one hand, and a lancet in the other, as if he had been attempting in vain to make the blood follow his instrument, while a gentleman dressed in black, who, I suppose is her husband, is walking up and down the room in a state of sullen distress.”

“ She is, indeed,” said Asmodeus, “ past the aid of human skill; her spirit is

on the moment of taking its flight for ever ; and this event, all melancholy as you may consider it to be, will change its aspect, when I inform you, that the form on which you have fixed your sympathetic regards, is all which, in a few minutes, will remain of that *Honoria* whose situation so much affected your feelings this morning, when I gave you the history of it, previous to my falling forth with you on our present progress. She seems to have been preserved by Heaven itself, from one of those trying positions to which female virtue has been sometimes exposed, and never, in my experience, been able to resist. Nor have I the least doubt but she, with all the dignified superiority of her character, would have fallen, if Death had not appeared, as he oftener does than weak, short-sighted mortals are disposed to conceive, a protector from over-hanging evil. The man in black, whom you suppose to be her husband, is the faithless and favourite friend to whose hypocritic arts she

was

“ I have seldom,” exclaimed Don Cleofas, in a tone of uncommon animation,—
“ very seldom beheld a scene of real life that has afforded me a more sensible pleasure than this chamber of death ;—I stand, as it were, on the beach, and see the beautiful vessel escape the surrounding shoals, and enter the harbour of eternal safety.”

“ And without any malicious design,” said Asmodeus, “ of cooling the charming ardour of your heroic sensations, permit me to recommend your attentions to pass on no further than the next door, where you will be the witness of another escape,—which, though it may not work you up into such poetic sentiments as the last, has wherewithal, I should hope, to afford

afford a satisfaction very gratifying to your humanity."

"The gentleman whom you now see rising from his bed, was taken so very ill during the night, that he thought it necessary to send for a physician;—but from the hurry and alarm of the occasion, or the carelessness of those who were concerned in this hasty commission, the doctor was not rightly informed of the sick gentleman's address;—and after driving about half the morning for nothing, was forced to give nature an opportunity, which medical professors very seldom allow her, if they can possibly help it, to recover the patient herself."

"And what wonderful escape is there in all this?" demanded the Count.

"A very providential one for the gentleman," answered the Demon; "for if the doctor had found him out, nature would have

have been driven from the field, and the sick man would have gone to his grave."

"Your Lordship," continued he, has beheld in the course of this morning, various exhibitions of the last scene of life,—but no particular opportunity has occurred, till the present moment, of offering to your attention any regular representation of a cool, determined preparation for it:—But the philosophic personage in an upper room of the small house with ranges of flower-pots before the windows, is in that very serious predicament."

"I must then have misapprehended your direction," said Don Cleofas, "for the person who is now in my view, though he has a very pale and emaciated form, does not by any means appear, according to my conception of the business, to be engaged in preparing for that country from whence no traveller returns:—He is not accompanied by any spiritual comforter of

the church;—on the contrary, he seems to be deeply engaged in the business and concerns of the world;—and, instead of books of prayer and devotion,—the table before him is covered with papers, which he seems to be examining with all the attention of a miser, when he pores over the writings upon whose security he has advanced his money.”

“He will not, however,” answered Asmodeus, “preserve them with the same care; for while I am speaking, you may see him consign a large parcel of them, without any ceremony, to the flames.”

“He is a man of taste and learning, who has supported himself for many years, in a very comfortable manner, by the employment of his pen;—he has, however, long had an unfortunate propensity to strong liquors, which has at length brought him into a premature state of decay, for which all the restorative powers of medicine

cine are of no avail.—He is sensible of his situation, and meets his approaching end with the calmness of a philosophic mind:—He thinks very rightly, that his future allotment will depend upon the general tenor of his whole life; and that it cannot be effected by a sudden or forced application to the offices of devotion, and the ceremonials of religion, at the last hour of it:—he therefore employs the short remainder of his appointed time,—as the intervals of strength and spirits enable him,—in correcting his works which have been already published, and examining his unpublished manuscripts; least the mistaken zeal of friends, or the greedy avarice of booksellers, should diminish, by any posthumous volumes,—a case by no means uncommon,—the reputation he has very deservedly acquired by the published labours of his life.—Indeed so jealous is he of his literary character, that of the piles of paper, which would be sufficient to form quartos and folios, he will scarce leave

enough behind him to compose an octavo volume.

“ The next door neighbour of this sensible author is also preparing to quit the enjoyments and business of life ;—but his precautions, though governed by an equal solicitude, are not directed to a similar object.—For, as reputation was not a principal concern with him, during any part of his life, he is not very anxious about establishing it after his death.

“ This most excellent man has been several times tapped for the dropsy, but has now every reason to believe, that he is beyond any further relief from a repetition of that operation :—he has therefore determined to arrange the final settlement of his affairs, by making his last will and testament ;—which, having long practised as an attorney, he is certainly very well qualified to do, without any assistance whatever.—There is, however, a singular example

example of professional candour in this important transaction, which merits your particular attention;—for, having never done a single thing, throughout a very active life, but with a view to the money he was to get by it, he is actually afraid of doing any thing for nothing, even tho' it be for himself;—lest, not having his accustomed motives, he should forget his accustomed skill and sagacity.—He has, therefore, previous to his professional occupation, taken five guineas out of his right-hand breeches pocket, and put it into his left, in order, by this appearance of receiving a fee, to stimulate his attention, and secure a right to his own knowledge, in this last, and very essential act of his profession and his life.”

“ This is a very curious little history,” said the Count, of that propensity in the human mind to deceive itself;—and I doubt, not will be considered as a very entertaining anecdote by you and your
K 5 friends.

friends.—It also disposes me to observe, that those worldly habits must possess an uncommon degree of inveteracy, that retain their power to the last gleam of departing existence;—and the mind, I fear, must be hardened to a most fatal degree of obduracy, which retains the violence of interested passions to the period when their past gratification does not afford a pleasing recollection, and the future enjoyment of them is without hope.—Death, preceded by insensibility, cannot be a death of comfort;—and the man whose heart retains an envious wish, and a resentful sensation, however he may deceive himself, cannot be said to die in peace.”

“ There is not,” said the Demon smiling, “ a bishop or divine, in any Christian country, who could, with the shadow of consistency, refuse his assent to your doctrine; it is orthodoxy itself;—and yet, such is the strange composition of the human character, it sometimes happens, that
men

men not only meet death without fear; but with the greatest composure, whose last hours manifest all the resentment of their lives, and who exert themselves to perpetuate their displeasure, when the heart that felt it is mouldered into dust.

“ As an example of this observation,—so mortifying to human excellence,—I must desire you to contemplate the figure of an enfeebled old man, bolstered up in his bed, with a person writing at a small table by the side of it.—That gentleman has been already afflicted by two strokes of the apoplexy,—has lost the entire use of one side,—can scarce articulate sufficiently to make himself understood,—and is in hourly expectation of the final attack, which will transfer him from his bed to his tomb:—Yet this unhappy man, who has had such painful and certain warnings of his dissolution,—whose half of himself is, as it were, already under the dominion of death,—and to whose mind, it might be imagined,

the sentiments of benevolence and charity would be soothing and consolatory,—this poor, dying man, is now engaged in giving instructions to his lawyer to draw up a codicil to his will, in order to mark his inveterate hatred of a former friend, whom he conceives, from some circumstances, of which he was maliciously informed but yesterday, to have acted with a degree of ingratitude which merits the resentment he is at this moment indulging, with an original display of violence and bitterness.

This curious codicil, which has not its equal in the records of death-bed malevolence, is as follows :

‘ I do hereby desire my executors to
‘ lay out the sum of ten guineas in the
‘ purchase of a picture, representing the
‘ fable of the man stung to death by the
‘ viper, whom he had restored to life, by
‘ affording it the warmth of his bosom ;—
‘ and

‘ and that, when such picture is purchased,
‘ I do desire my said executors to have it
‘ carefully conveyed to — — — — Esq.
‘ as a legacy left him by me, instead of the
‘ sum of three thousand pounds, which I
‘ had bequeathed him, before I discovered
‘ that the fabulous ingratitude of the rep-
‘ tile was realised in him.’

“ If you cannot consistently do it for the honour of human nature,” exclaimed Don Cleofas, “ do, I beseech you, for the sake of my feelings, instantly assure me, that the most malignant of your cohort of spirits has possessed itself of this dying man’s bosom.—It could be nothing less than the fatal exertions of some malevolent power, that could work up a mind possessing all its reason, to find consolation under such infirmities, and at the last hour of life, in shaping revenge into such a malignant and curious form.—I must, my good friend, intreat and beg of you——”

Ask

“ Ask no questions on the subject, if you please,” said the Demon, “ but amuse your impatience by examining the contents of an hackney-coach that stops at a door just within our view ;—you will there see something, perhaps, that may change the nature of your present anxiety.”

“ A sick gentleman,” observed the Count, “ assisted by three others, is taken from the carriage, and borne with much apparent care and tenderness into the house ; where, I am to suppose, from his being at this time presented to my attention, he will shortly breathe his last.”

“ It is even so,” answered Asmodeus ; “ he has, within this hour, received a ball in a duel, which will have the precise effect upon him that you have prognosticated.—The origin and conclusion of the business I shall now take the liberty of relating to you.

Mr.

“ Mr. W — — — is a gentleman of a moderate, independent fortune, who was originally intended for the law, which he for some time studied in one of the inns of court ;—but though his talents were formed to attain eminence in any profession, his mind was unambitious of greatness, and his taste was entirely devoted to the fine arts and polite learning.—It cannot therefore be heard by you with any degree of surprize, that he at length determined to content himself with his fortune, such as it was, and pursue those objects, unprofitable as they might be, which were most suitable to his character and disposition. He accordingly quitted the cumbrous folios of a lawyer’s library, and the midnight lamp of law study, for the less ambitious, but more delightful pursuits of an elegant and classical mind.—After passing several years in foreign countries, he returned to his own, that kind of accomplished man whose society never fails of being courted by all persons of literary eminence, and every lover

lover of polished science. In this manner he has passed, to the unfortunate day before us, a life of solid satisfaction, and real honour. Tranquillity and learned ease were all he desired,—and he possessed the means of enjoying them.

“ This amiable gentleman very frequently visited a lady of considerable fortune, who was a distant relation of his mother’s, without any other views than such as the regard and respect due to a person so connected with him, might be supposed to dictate.—This good lady, as I have just observed, was possessed of an ample fortune, which, some months ago, became an interesting object to a distressed younger brother of a noble family, who had made an accidental acquaintance with her at one of the public places of summer resort.—As he was a man of fashion, she received him, in a general way, at her house in town, without the least suspicion of his intentions.—Indeed she was so astonished

nished at hearing his proposals of marriage, that her refusal did not wear the form of politeness, with which she would most certainly have softened it, if she had been, by any previous intelligence, in a state of preparation to communicate a denial of so unpleasant a nature.

“ The disappointed lover, whose personal vanity and family pride could not reconcile such a refusal from the daughter of a merchant, and the widow of a banker, to any other cause but a particular and acknowledged preference to some other person, had, from the easy, familiar manner with which he had observed the lady to conduct herself towards Mr. W——, set down that gentleman on his tablets as his favoured rival.—In such a case, he had nothing to do, but to console himself as well as he could, by applying to the common amusements of young men of his character and disposition.—Still, however, as his affairs became more disarranged
and

and his circumstances more critical, he occasionally looked back with a renewed eye of regret to the widow's fortune;—and finding at the end of three months, that she was still unmarried, and from further enquiries, that Mr. W—— was not considered as her lover, but merely as her relation and friend,—he determined to make another attack upon the lady and her treasure.

“ As he now made his approaches in a more regular form than he had before done,—she was prepared to defend herself in a very different manner than when he attempted to take her by a *coup de main*.—When therefore he drew so nigh as to repeat his former propositions, she told him, in terms of great civility, but with a very confounding firmness of tone and manner,—that, as she had foreseen for some time, the honour he had then done her, she had herself given the subject every previous consideration which it required;—and had
also

also consulted those by whose opinion she had been in the habit of determining every important act of her widowed life;—she should therefore, without entering into any explanation whatever, inform him at once, that the original determination of her own mind was fully confirmed by the advice of her friends,—which was—to decline that change in her situation which he had thought proper to propose.

“ This high-spirited gentleman, who was again repulsed in such an important enterprize, had hitherto considered Mr. W——— merely as an unoffending rival, whose better fortune he could only envy;—but the appearance of things now began to wear a different colour;—and he did not hesitate to consider that gentleman as one of those friends of the lady, who had advised her in her conduct respecting himself.—As such an interference appeared to his jealous, interested honour, in the light of a personal insult, he was determined,
if

if possible, to know the fact;—and if he should find it to be as his suspicion had suggested, to make it a subject of honourable revenge.

“ Mr. W——, with the tranquil disposition of a philosopher, had,—both from his education, and his communications with the world,—acquired that manly spirit which is considered in polished society as necessary to maintain the character of a gentleman:—He therefore received the disappointed lover with all the ease of well-bred indifference;—and when he was asked whether he had interfered in disposing the lady’s mind to refuse the connection which had been proposed to her,—the question appeared to him to be put with so much presumption, hauteur, and apparent menace,—that he was unhappily irritated beyond his usual bounds of discretion;—and, to his denial of having been consulted on the occasion,—he added a very unreserved declaration,—that if his relation had
thought

thought proper to have honoured him with her confidence in the business,—he should have confirmed the opinion of those friends whose advice she had so wisely adopted.—As you may suppose,—a very angry conversation immediately ensued,—mutual insults followed,—and a duel was this morning fought by them,—the consequence of which you have in some measure beheld.

“ Mr. W—— is mortally wounded ; —and when his own suspicions are confirmed by a consultation of surgeons, who will be called to give their opinion on his case,—he will prepare for death with the calm, benevolent spirit that has distinguished his life :—Nor will his friends, who feel a resentment for him which he does not feel for himself, be able to prevail on him to say one word that may tend to the prejudice of his antagonist ;—on the contrary,—he will die with the declaration, that he alone was to blame ;—and
that

that the gentleman with whom he fought, had behaved like a man of honour.—Nay, his last request to them all will be, that if the survivor should be brought to trial, they will repeat his last words as an exculpatory testimony in favour of the unfortunate man.”

“As an human being,” said the Count, “I am in some degree restored to myself;—but I at the same time feel a new and more lively regret arise in my mind, at the conclusion of the history.—I wished the dying paralytic to live, that he might, if possible, have learned benevolence;—and I lament the death of the excellent man who fell in the duel, because he is cut off in the habitual practice of it.”

“It is a truth,” answered Asmodeus, “that a devil ought not to teach;—and might wear a suspicious appearance, if it came from any other than myself;—but the fact is, that he who dies to virtue, can

never be justly said to die too soon.—Mr. W—— might have lived, from various causes, to have lost, or to have suffered, at least, a diminution of his virtues;—and though the weakness of the human heart may lament him,—the wisdom of the mind will, under all the unpleasant circumstances of his end, congratulate his escape.

“ But to proceed : — I must entreat your Lordship to turn your eyes from the street to the back part of a range of houses to the left of our present situation, and in the very first of them you will see an elderly person, in a great chair, conversing with a couple of gentlemen, who sit on the other side of the table.”

“ I see them as plain,” said Don Cleofas, as if I was at the window of their chamber ;—and from the easy manner, and pleasant aspect of them all, I could wish
to

to be informed of the subject of their conversation."

"It would be perfectly *Socratic*," replied Asmodeus, "if the present companions of the dying man happened to wear the melancholy countenances of those who accompanied the last scene of the celebrated philosopher.—The discourse of this party is on the immortality of the soul;—which, however, does no more than give the peculiar colouring of the moment to their former confirmed opinions on that important and elevating subject. — The sick man considers himself only as on the point of changing, to use his own familiar expression, one place for another.—While the two gentlemen with him, who have been his most intimate friends, and are about the same age, consider him as setting out a little while before them, on a journey which they themselves expect shortly to take,—and to a country where
it

it is their hope and belief that they shall soon rejoin him.—They reason on life as men who, throughout every part of it, have looked towards the period, whose near approach they now regard with all the calm contemplation of conscious virtue.

“ The excellent man in the arm-chair, whose countenance expresses what may, with great truth, be called the most sublime state of the mind,—and whose conversation possesses the placid energies of it, has not many hours to live:—He is free from pain,—and he knows his present ease to be the sure symptom of approaching death.—It is, as he is now expressing himself,—a blessing from Heaven, to enable the mind to make its last incorporated exertion without being interrupted by pain, or obscured by insensibility.—The mortal and immortal parts of me, he says, will I trust, make their eternal separation in good humour with each other.”

“ One might almost wish,” said Don Cleofas, “ to be one of their company ;— for I cannot discover any thing in either of them that looks like fool-hardiness or timidity,—presumption or despair,—enthusiasm or infidelity ;—it is the calm, quiet society of good men looking the most awful object of life in the face, without the faintest sensation of terror, or any shadow of doubt in the final distribution of eternal justice.”

“ They are all of them,” replied Afmodeus, “ among the best of men ;—and the magnanimous temper of the dying man is not more evident in his present sentiments, than his past actions ;—as you will be convinced from the very brief sketch I shall give you of his life.

“ He had received an education, suited in every particular to the heir of a great landed property ;—and on the day he came of age, his uncle dropped down in a fit,
amid

amid the festivities of the occasion, from which he never recovered; and left his fortune in such an involved state to his nephew, that the latter was advancing towards the middle period of life before he had disentangled himself from the embarrassments he had so unexpectedly inherited. For twelve years was he calumniated and ill-treated, opposed and thwarted, by a distant relation, through whose arts, and from whose unjust claims, he was, during all that time, in a very distressing state of suspense, apprehension, and dependence.—At length, however, the law, which established him in his rights,—pronounced the ruin of his villainous opponent, who, after several years of shift and tricks, found himself at last enclosed in a prison, on account of debts, which there was no probable expectation he would be ever able to discharge.—Of such an event this excellent man was no sooner informed, than he secretly sent him a weekly supply, for the comfortable sup-

port of his situation. — The imprisoned debtor has ever been influenced by those passions which would render it impossible for him, amidst all his conjectures, to suppose for a moment, that this seasonable and saving relief could come in return for such a long course of injuries. — The will of the dying gentleman will however astonish him with the knowledge of his benefactor; for there he will find a sum of money left, sufficient to give him liberty; — and a comfortable annuity to be paid him by the executors, as long as they shall be of opinion that he makes a proper use of it.”

“ This is a most animating picture,” said the Count, “ and I thank you for it with all my heart. — That quality of the mind which we generally call heroism, is oftentimes possessed by the worst of men. Tyrants have been heroes; — cowards have died with all the appearance of courage; — despair has performed the most brilliant actions; — traitors and murderers have
stood

stood firm while the executioner trembled, — and obduracy of heart has been able to mimic the calm philosophy of a dying hour:—But the true heroism of death can only arise from the undeceiving consciousness of an honourable and virtuous life;—and such a picture of heroism,—thanks to your friendly communications,—is now unveiled to me.—It redeems every mortifying or distressful scene which this day has presented;—and will fortify me against any dubious or alarming reflections, which might otherwise arise from such as may yet be exposed to me in the course of it.”

“ Such a declaration,” said Asmodeus, “ is exactly suited to your present situation;—and I trust that you are about to confirm the truth of it in the calm manner in which you will hear me relate an example of human insensibility, which is without parallel even in my extensive experience of human conduct.—The particular

L 3

lar

lar object of it is a man in the room with a Venetian window ;—you may now see him reading a pamphlet, and taking his chocolate, with the most perfect tranquillity, —nor does he belie the situation of his mind ;—though the most intimate friend he had in the world, —whom he has known, and, —as he would say, —loved, from his earliest years, lies dead, from the violence of a dispute between them, in the chamber immediately over him.

“ These two friends, as we must call them, are natives of France ; and came to pass some time together in this country :—They took that house, where they both resided, dividing the expences of their little establishment between them.—It was but yesterday that these affectionate friends had a most acrimonious, and, as it proved, a fatal difference, for it terminated in the death of one of them.—In giving their cook the necessary orders for dinner, the
worthy

worthy man whom you now see, proposed the asparagus to be served in gravy, while the other contended for plain butter.—One would suppose it impossible that any serious consequences could arise from such a difference of taste;—but so it was;—for their culinary arguments in support of their respective dishes, got at length to such an height of dispute and passion, that the advocate for plain butter broke a blood vessel on the occasion, which caused his immediate death.”

“ In my life,” said the Count, “ I have never heard of so strange an accident; but, I pray you, be so kind as to inform me, how this friend supported the unexpected and affecting circumstance.”

“ It is precisely what I am going to tell you,” replied the Demon.”—No sooner had the surgeon who was called in declared the irrecoverable state of his dying patient, than the surviving disputant sent

instantly for the cook ;—and after observing that all contest about the arrangement of the dinner was at an end,—he told her, with the utmost tranquillity, to serve the asparagus in gravy.”

“ This, my good friend,” exclaimed Don Cleofas, “ is a fabrication of your own wicked wit, to put the tranquil resolution of my temper to the trial ;—and I admire the ready ingenuity of your invention ;—but——

“ A truce, my Lord, if you please, to your raillery ;” interrupted Asmodeus,—the fact is, without the least exaggeration, as I have related it ;—and, if you wish to have your incredulity removed, I will discover to you the lifeless form, that you may judge for yourself.”

“ By no means,” replied the Count, “ I really wish, in this particular instance, to remain an unbeliever ;—and as for life-

less forms,—by whatever means they have been brought into that situation,—whether in the common course of nature, or from the violence of disease;—whether they have fallen in disputes for kingdoms, or the *entremets* of a table,—my eyes are not in the humour to communicate with them.”

“ Then,” said the Devil upon Two Sticks, “ you do not possess the dispositions of that gentleman in a black wig, who is hurrying along with all the haste of some important business;—and a very important one it is to him,—for he has bribed an undertaker to get him a sight of a dead Maid of Honour;—and by some very unexpected interruption, he is half an hour beyond the time of his appointment.

“ Do not look, if you please, with so much astonishment at me,—but at the person to whom I have directed your attentions; and I must insist on your credit

to my assertion, that a very principal delight of his life has long been, and still is, to view the human appearance of death.—He is a perfect amateur of dead subjects;—and he views the body of a fellow-creature, when deprived of life, in any shape or way, with the same gusto that the man of taste regards an admirable example of painting or sculpture, or any other beautiful display of the fine arts.—He became an object of very serious displeasure to the late King of this country, for having assumed the appearance of an undertaker's workman, in order to get a sight of the deceased Queen,—and entertaining his friends, by his humourous description of the weepings and wailings of bed-chamber ladies and maids of honour, on the mournful occasion.—A public execution is a scene of such exquisite pleasure to his fancy, that no temptation could induce him to forego it;—as you will readily conceive, when I inform you, that having made a very large bet in favour of his absenting himself

self from some particular spectacle of this nature,—he was actually discovered in the gratification of his irresistible propensity, dressed in the habit of a woman, and seated upon the fore-horse of a cart, behind the driver of it.—Nay, so powerful is his curiosity for such melancholy objects, that he made a journey to Paris, with the sole view of being present at the last horrid punishment of a criminal, whose tortures were closed by his being torn limb from limb by horses, for having attempted the life of the King of France.”

“ I should suppose then,” said Don Cleofas, “ that this very singular man, with such a love for the society of the dead, does not find a very willing association among the living.”

“ Never was an opinion more erroneous,” answered Asmodeus, “ his company is sought by all who are acquainted with him, and envied by all who possess

not that enlivening privilege. While his foible is a subject of private ridicule,—the animating exertion of his social powers is a matter of general admiration.—In colloquial brilliance he is without a rival;—and with an apt, ready, and inexhaustible wit, which is universally known, and on continual record, he possesses a very considerable store of solid knowledge, which is confined to what may be called the home circle of his particular friends.”

“ But, in the name of wonder, do tell me,” said the Count, “ how does this man discharge the duties of an husband?—

in what manner does he educate his children?—Are they inured in their entrance into life, to an hereditary contemplation of the scenes of death?—Are their tender minds scientifically hardened against the common emotions of nature?—and does he think it becoming the human character, —or the surest way to attain honour and happiness, to pass through life without those

those sentiments and affections which are allied to, and form a part of the tender virtues?"

"He is neither," replied the Demon, "an husband or a father;—but he is not without something like the sensibility of the latter character;—for having no child of his own, he has adopted the natural daughter of an intimate friend;—who, when age and infirmities have put an end to his present pursuits, will be his delight and his consolation.—He educates this amiable girl with all the lavish care of parental affection;—and will continue his regard when he shall be no more, by leaving her a considerable part of his fortune."

"After all," said Don Cleofas, "if it were consistent with the customs of the country,—my opinion is,—that his carcass should be exposed, after his death, to the gaze of every eye."

"And

“ And such a circumstance, could it happen,” answered Asmodeus, “ would be foreseen by him without any unpleasant emotions.—His mind is troubled with none of those delicate sensations which would be in general called forth by looking forward to such an event:—for it is a matter of perfect indifference to him, whether, when life no longer animates his frame, it should be consigned to the dissecting knife of a surgeon,—or be borne in all the parade of funeral pomp, to the sepulchre of his ancestors.—And there, if you please, we will leave him; for to answer all the interrogatories which may be put,—or to give an explanation of all the observations which may be made concerning the eccentricity of the human character, is beyond the capacity of the most ingenious devil of us all.

“ Besides,—with all your abhorrence of those peculiarities which I have just had the honour of relating to you,—I could produce

duce a thousand examples of the common occurrences and ordinary pursuits of life, which are far more degrading to the mind, —more dishonourable to human nature,—and more injurious to society, than that singularity of disposition which has just received such decided marks of your disgust and aversion.—I have even several characters now under my eye, which would incontrovertibly prove to you the truth of my assertion,—and I will select one of them, who, being in a dying condition, is more particularly appropriate to the tenor of our morning's employment.

“ The lady, whom you will honour with your attention, in a room with a bow window, half obscured by green silk curtains, is one of those, whose life, though in perfect harmony with the fashion of the world, and the usages of the higher class of society, has been much more obnoxious to herself, and much less productive of good to others, than that of the death-hunter,

hunter, whose very idea, I perceive, gives to your features the silent language of abhorrence.

“ A long course of years has furnished her with no other pleasure, but such as can be found in the feverish employments of the card-table.—With a fortune by no means more than sufficient for the common appearances of genteel life, she plays as if she had a ducal revenue at her command:—Nay, one high-spirited evening has frequently seen a whole year’s income put to the hazard.—Though she has practised this business of her life with considerable success,—for so it may be called,—as she has not long ago been absolutely ruined,—her mind can never have known a moment’s tranquillity since she first began to offer her nocturnal sacrifices to the demon of gaming.—The agitated joy which arises from winning, and the fretful misery which must proceed from losing,—with the occasional alarms of total

tal ruin,—have long occupied between them, her harrassed mind, nor left a single interval for benevolence,—for pity,—for the endearing sentiments of sympathetic tenderness and affection,—or for any of those charities which at once soften and elevate the heart.

“ In short, the distractions and irregularities of such a life have brought on a cancerous disorder, which will shortly terminate in her death;—and you now behold her in a state of bodily anguish, which is capable of no alleviation but from the temporary influence of opiates, —and without any mental consolation, but such as can be derived from the reflection that she has passed her life in the best company,—and has still a fragment of her fortune left from the vortex of the gaming table, which will prove sufficient to pay her surgeons,—to provide herself with a decent burial,—and to leave an annuity to an old servant, for
the

the due maintenance of two Russian cats, a prating parrot and a French lap-dog."

"This is a very strange source of consolation indeed," observed the Count, "but I begin to be reconciled a little to the varieties of the human mind, in a situation, where I must own, till this day, I did not suspect they could prevail, at least in that proportion which, by your favour, is now evident to my conviction."

"I have more than once had occasion to remark, during the course of this morning," said the Demon, "that the singularities of the passions, and the peculiar habits of the mind, attend poor mortals thro' life, nor quit them till they die;—and though I have not much more time to spare you at present,—what yet remains of it, will continue to give added confirmation to those opinions which have arisen in your mind from the experience of your present occupation;—but to proceed:—"

"In

“ In a long room, which projects from the center house, and forms an elegant library, you may see an old man, in a green *robe de chambre*, and a night-cap, tied at the top by a ribbon of the same colour, with a pair of crutches resting against the wainscot beside him.—He is verging also to the final period of existence,—a circumstance that does not affect him with the least alarm,—and of which he is at this moment discoursing to his family, with the eloquence of a scholar, and the philosophy of a stoick.

“ He is a gentleman of large fortune, and has passed all the leisure hours of the last forty years in the acquisition of elegant literature:—His life, if it has not been distinguished for its utility, has, at least, been innocent;—for the prudent care of his family,—the employment of his study, and the society of rather a confined circle of sensible men, have occupied all his time, since he arrived at the age of manhood

hood to the present moment, when all his occupations are hastening to a conclusion.

“ The active scenes and busy engagements of the world, have had no charm for him:—He has a very commanding interest in a borough, but could never be persuaded, by his family or his friends, to offer himself to the certain and uncontrolled representation of it;—though the senatorial office was, apparently, of all others, the most adapted to his character, as it has ever been his principal pleasure,—and some have thought it a prevailing foible,—to indulge himself in a ceaseless fluency of speech, which gave all his conversation, whatever the subject of it might be,—whether trivial or important,—the form of grave discourse, and detailed illustration.—For the fact is,—that a misfortune which gave him a subject for harangue, and a blessing that afforded no scope for his eloquence, possessed somewhat of an equivalent value in his mind.

The

“ The predominant disposition of this singular person was very naturally indulged by his family,—who indeed may be said to have been inured to it from their cradles;—and his intimate friends,—who loved him for the many good qualities he possessed, were always willing to let him occupy the place in conversation which he was disposed to take;—or, as was very frequently the case, to engross the whole of it.—As for the younger part of his acquaintance, besides their knowledge of his habits, which would of course produce an acquiescence in them,—they reaped instruction from his discourses, and were therefore delighted to become the silent attendants on his society.

“ To ask his advice was to gain his immediate and partial favour;—and it has sometimes happened, that artful people have, by their well-conducted impositions, made him pay dear for the pleasure of communicating his opinions to them.—

In

In short,—he not only consoles himself on the eternal separation from his friends and children, which is now approaching,—but may be almost said to delight in it,—from the characteristic reflection on the many fine things which may be said upon it.—All that has fallen from the pens of Pagan and Christian writers, on the subject of death;—and all that has been said by heroes, philosophers, sages, and martyrs, at the last hour of life, is familiar to his mind;—and he is at this time adding his own reflections to the moralizing strain of other men, and other times, on the common topic of human mortality.”

“As it may, perhaps, amuse you,” continued Asmodeus, “to hear the manner in which this elegant and amiable pedant is consoling himself, and his surrounding relations, on the subject of his approaching dissolution,—I will repeat his sentiments in the very language in which he is
at

at this moment delivering them to the solemn little auditory before him."

' When I tell you, my children, that I
' am about to die, your looks express the
' mingled sentiments of surprize and af-
' fliction :—But wherefore should you be
' astonished that I am about to fulfil that
' design of my nature for which I was
' born?—After so many generations of
' men, from the creation of the world,
' have sunk into the grave, you might,
' indeed, look with amazement, if any
' individual of the present race of mankind
' were to be preserved from it.—When
' Abraham and the patriarchs, — when
' Moses and the prophets, — when the
' evangelists and the apostles, have sub-
' mitted to the common fate of man;—
' or, to select our examples from the less
' sacred characters, who have made a
' figure in the world, in the ordinary
' course of human progression ; — when
' Alexander and Cæsar, —when Demosthe-
nes,

‘ nes and Cicero,—when Socrates and
‘ Plato,—when Cato and Brutus,—when
‘ these illustrious conquerors,—powerful
‘ orators,—sublime philosophers, and ri-
‘ gid patriots of other times and other
‘ countries;——when Marlborough and
‘ Wolfe, —when Chatham and Boling-
‘ broke,—when Locke and Newton,—
‘ when Sidney and Russel, who possessed
‘ the same distinguished characters, as it
‘ were, in our own time, and in our
‘ country;—I say, when the grave has
‘ heaped its mould on these men, and
‘ many others of equal name,—wherefore
‘ should it surprize you that I, who am
‘ beneath the lowest of them in the scale
‘ of existence, am about to add another
‘ subject to the realms of death?—The
‘ cause of wonder is rather, that life, with
‘ all those open and secret enemies, which
‘ begin their attack at the moment of
‘ our birth, and besiege us in our cradles,
‘ should be of so long duration.—Indeed,
‘ when I consider the helpless state of in-
‘ fancy,

‘ fancy,—the careless folly of our boyish
‘ days,—the passions of youth,—and the
‘ bustle of advanced life,—the train of dis-
‘ eases to which we are subject,—the pe-
‘ rils by land, and the perils by water,—
‘ with the sorrows, afflictions, and heart-
‘ aches, which perpetually harass man in
‘ his march through life,—it is matter of
‘ the most serious astonishment to me,
‘ that I, at the prolonged age of three-
‘ score and five years, am taking leave
‘ of the world.—How many just open
‘ their eyes on the day, and then close them
‘ for ever?—Numbers have scarce quitted
‘ the breasts of their mother, when they
‘ sunk into the earth, on which they
‘ just began to tread.—Youth is a season
‘ peculiarly fatal to life,—and manhood,
‘ with all its strength, is the frequent vic-
‘ tim of death.—Of the myriads which are
‘ called into existence, how few is the
‘ comparative number of those who reach
‘ the period which I have attained!—In-
‘ deed, when I look back at the friends

‘ and companions of my early days,—
‘ with whom I begun, as it were, the
‘ race of life,—I behold the plain bestrewn
‘ with them,—and scarce one remains to
‘ see me reach the goal.

‘ To feel astonishment,—if you do feel
‘ it,—at an event so common,—which
‘ you must, in the ordinary course of na-
‘ ture, expect for me now, and for your-
‘ selves hereafter,—betrays a negligence
‘ of reflection that it will become you to
‘ correct;—nor will the common af-
‘ fliction, so often, and, as I think, so
‘ idly displayed, at our mortal separations
‘ from each other, especially when they
‘ wait upon what may be called the ma-
‘ turity of nature, find a justifiable excuse,
‘ on any principle of wisdom.

‘ Death cannot be an evil, because it
‘ is universal;—for I do not hesitate to
‘ say, that it is not in the nature,—I had
‘ almost added, it is not in the power, of
‘ the

‘ the Supreme Being, according to our
‘ view and conception of his attributes
‘ and essence, to create an universal evil.—
‘ Death is no more an evil than life;—
‘ and while we rejoice in the one, we de-
‘ grade the powers of our reason, and be-
‘ lie the hopes of our virtue, to lament
‘ the other.—As men, it becomes us to
‘ bewail our errors, and the tear that is
‘ shed over human infirmity, may not al-
‘ ways disgrace us;—but to weep because
‘ the career of error and infirmity verges
‘ to a close, betrays a mind insensible to
‘ the dignity of virtue, or so debased by
‘ the grovelling passions, as to be rendered
‘ incapable of being ennobled by it.

‘ We were certainly sent into this
‘ world as a scene of trial and conflict:—
‘ We were born to suffer:—Our sorrows
‘ are a necessary, and therefore a beautiful
‘ part of our existence.—Philosophy and
‘ religion both preach this doctrine;—and
‘ they both, if, in compliance with some

‘ particular opinions, we may be allowed to
‘ separate them,—afford us the means of
‘ becoming conquerors over all those ene-
‘ mies which are permitted to oppose us,
‘ in order to give us an opportunity of
‘ exerting our faculties, proving our vir-
‘ tue, and thereby preparing us for the
‘ final elevation of our nature.

‘ If the most illustrious youth of wise
‘ and polished Greece, aspired to display
‘ their skill, their strength, their courage,
‘ and their patience,—or even to sacrifice
‘ their lives, at the Olympic games,—and
‘ considered the applauses of the venerable
‘ sages of their country, as the most enno-
‘ bling rewards that various victory could
‘ receive, with what superior pride should
‘ enlightened man exert the noblest energies
‘ of his nature, who knows that the con-
‘ tests of life are performed in the view of
‘ Heaven;—and that the prize for which
‘ he contends, is not the wreath of an
‘ hour,

hour,—but a crown that will be verdant
for ever.

As the waves of the ocean, so do the
generations of men succeed one another.
We stand, as it were, upon the dust of
our ancestors,—and we shall form the
base of those who come after us.—All
things are progressive, and, with unva-
rying pace, proceed towards the com-
pletion of the great object, whatever it
may be, for which they were all ori-
ginally formed.—I, who am no more
than an atom in the general mass of
creation,—after having passed through
the preparatory state of life, am hasten-
ing to the part I am to take in that exist-
ence to which death will consign me.—
And of what should I be afraid?—I,
who have always felt the dignity of my
nature, and borne in my mind the pride
of my celestial origin:—and, though
often, and, as I conceive, necessarily,
encumbered with human difficulties,

‘ and perplexed by the natural obstruc-
‘ tions of our common allotment,—I feel
‘ at this moment, when I am about to
‘ shake off the mortal coil, that my soul
‘ is emancipating itself from the shackles
‘ of mortality :—Nor can I be sufficiently
‘ thankful that it is in a fit state to take
‘ its flight to eternity, being unspotted
‘ by the stains of mortal corruption, and
‘ cleansed from all those gross materials
‘ with which it has been burthened in its
‘ progress along the path of time.”

‘ I have suffered pain, and I rejoice
‘ that I have felt it.—I have had my con-
‘ flicts,—but I look upon them with the ex-
‘ ulting eye of the soldier, who dwells on
‘ those toils and dangers which have given
‘ him his laurels.—My life has been that
‘ state of unoppressive sorrow which the
‘ world calls prosperity; and I am most
‘ grateful at this hour that it has not de-
‘ ceived me.—At other periods this might
‘ have been considered as the language of
‘ vanity,—

‘ vanity,—as the self-conceit of an idle
‘ philosophy;—but I am now come to
‘ that moment when I can, without fear
‘ of deceiving myself, or the accusation of
‘ deceiving others, declare the source of
‘ that serene comfort which the long pro-
‘ mise of years to come, and the brightest
‘ diadems of the world to crown them,
‘ would not tempt me to forego.

‘ While I now speak I am mortal;—
‘ but in a few hours, perhaps, what is
‘ myself, will have escaped from slavery
‘ to freedom,—from night to day:—I feel
‘ myself already at the portals of immorta-
‘ lity.—My soul, while it was pent up
‘ in this crumbling frame, cannot have
‘ been said to live;—it only possessed, in
‘ its unconscious habitation, a conscious-
‘ ness of its nature,—and the power to
‘ prepare for the full enjoyment of it.—
‘ It has already existed unseen by you, and
‘ will exist hereafter.—I have no more
‘ interest in this world.—My hopes are
M 4 ‘ strength-

‘ strengthened even by my infirmities and
‘ decay ;—and I hasten to the object of all
‘ my wishes. — Oh the glorious hour,
‘ when I shall escape from this crowd,—
‘ this heap of pollution, and be admitted
‘ to the divine assembly of spirits,— to
‘ enjoy the society of the great and good
‘ of all ages and countries, without inter-
‘ ruption, and for ever !’

“ Such is the enthusiasm,” continued the Demon, “ with which this honest man supports the most awful moments of life ;—and it is with this kind of intellectual mechanism, by which the mind, notwithstanding all the fine things he has said about it, is continually influenced,— that he has supported the disappointments and afflictions, as well as heightened the enjoyments and pleasures of his life.— When he lost the wife whom he loved, a similar oration prevented the tears from bedewing his cheeks ;— and when the daughter on whom he doated, sunk from
his

his arms into a premature grave, —he consoled himself with discoursing on her virtues,—describing the evils of life from which she was delivered,—and apostrophising her spirit in the realms of happiness. In short, thus has he proceeded, in making almost every occurrence of his life a subject for his expatiating eloquence, to this moment, when he has employed it, as he hopes, to reconcile his surviving children to the approaching dissolution of their father,—and the enjoyment of that wealth which they will inherit from him.”

“ The dying speeches,” said the Count, “ which you are so good as to communicate to me, are, in good truth, very charming specimens of eloquence;—and this in particular, is attended with all the effects that could be wished by the departing orator;—for I do not perceive any thing like an appearance of sorrow in the countenance of his little auditors;—though, as you tell me, they hold the

M 5

nearest

nearest relation to him :—But as you suggest that the good old man has a large fortune to leave behind him,—they may find arguments in his last will and testament, of great energy and effect towards supporting the loss they are about to sustain.”

“ If I had made such a farcastic observation,” answered the Demon, “ you would, without the least hesitation, have done me the honour to have applied it to the wicked suspicions of my nature.—To tell you the truth, I am most completely disappointed at not hearing you break forth into some heroic eulogiums on this fine specimen of philosophic oratory ;—for, after all, the man who can, by such innocent means, enhance the pleasures, and lessen the evils of life, is an object which has a far superior claim to the admiration of mankind, and is a better excuse for their envy, than most of those qualities which so continually awaken and employ those connected

ned sentiments.—He certainly makes a very different figure, in the eye of reason, from the unhappy man in the very next house, who, instead of soothing his sorrows by the theories of eloquence, or the play of his fancy, has put an end to them at once by the serious and practical application of a pistol.—The history of this business has some circumstances of singularity, which will render it not wholly unworthy of your attention;—I shall therefore proceed at once to relate it to you.

“ Mr. C—— was a young gentleman of great hopes, the heir of a very large fortune, which had been entirely raised by his father, who, from very humble beginnings, had, by his industry and good fortune in trade, become one of the richest commercial individuals in this opulent kingdom.—With this large stock of wealth, the old man had the ambition to form a stock of another kind,—he was very anxious to make what is called a family. He,

M 6.

therefore,

therefore, educated his son in such a manner as to forward the establishment of his views; but, while they were in a state of progression, and the young gentleman was at college, the father died suddenly, and left him to the future possession of this ample inheritance. On leaving the university, Mr. C—— proceeded to make the tour of Europe, and while he was abroad, his good mother, who possessed all the family views of her late husband, was looking about, among the young women of quality at home, for a daughter-in-law, who would add her high blood to their great wealth.

“ While, however, the provident old lady was thus forming her plan of domestic greatness in England, a certain fly, young urchin of our fraternity, was most woefully deranging them in Italy.—Mr. C—— had been so struck with the appearance of a nun, whom he saw at the ceremony of taking the veil, in an Italian town, that he became most violently enamoured of the religious

religious lady; and, as money will do most things,—and he had enough to do almost any thing it can do,—he soon contrived to make his sentiments known to the object of his idolatry.

“ Leonora was a beautiful woman of high birth, who having put on the veil, not from any religious impulse, but from the interested and artful persuasions of her family, was not very much indisposed to receive the homage of a young man of the first appearance, and distinguished by his personal attractions;—and, by the assistance of a widow lady, of her acquaintance, who was, with no great difficulty, prevailed on to become the duenna of the business, it proceeded as far as the most refined sentiments and the walls of a convent would allow.

“ But, without entering into an idle and tedious detail of every tender circumstance which occurred from the first communication

munication of the lovers, I shall come at once to the moment when she avowed a passion warm as his own, and engaged, that if he would return to England, and prepare his mother for the reception of her, in the character of a daughter, she would escape from the convent, and follow him thither,—or die in the attempt.—He promised all she could desire,—obeyed her commands, and departed on the morrow.

“ They were no sooner informed that he was arrived in England, and that every thing was in a state of preparation for their reception, than, by the assistance of an inferior, but confidential officer, belonging to the church of the convent,—the religious lady, the widow, and the poor sacristan escaped together;—a very few hours were only necessary to get into a territory where no effectual pursuit could be made after them by the community; and, in a very few weeks, they safely arrived in this city, where they all expected to find the
certain

certain asylum of honour and happiness during the rest of their days.

“ Mr. C——, who, in the violence of his passion, proposed and promised marriage to Leonora, as the immediate consequence of her flight,—and who spoke the honest language of his heart when he made the proposition,—had, on his return to England, experienced a very considerable change in his sentiments, with respect to the matrimonial part of the engagement. He still continued to love Leonora with the most ardent passion; but though he was independent of his mother, and of all mankind, he began to feel the imprudence of such a connection as he had made,—the certain rupture the final conclusion of it would make between him and his family, and the natural suspicion with which the eye of the world would regard Leonora, under all the circumstances of her situation, even when she was become his wife.

“ Before

“ Before her arrival, therefore, he began to weigh in his mind the unpleasant consequences of family discord,—the afflicting, if not fatal disappointment of his mother, at such a marriage as he meditated, and the disgrace he might suffer throughout his life, as well as his children, even from the innocent, but suspicious conduct of the fair fugitive, to whom he had engaged himself;—at the same time he could not but reflect that his declarations, entreaties, and most solemn promises, had prevailed on this confiding woman to risk every thing for his sake.—In short, he was in this state of continual and painful agitation, from the opposite and distracting influence of honour, interest and passion, when he was informed, by a letter from Leonora, that she was arrived at Dover, and waited with extreme impatience to be conducted to him.

“ An Italian, whose former profession had been that of a priest,—and who had
for

for some years followed the more profitable trade of picture-dealing ;—a man of infinite art, address, and choice wickedness,—who had gained the confidence and friendship of Mr. C——, was employed to attend Leonora to her residence in this metropolis. — The amiable ambassador, who had not only been entrusted with the whole of the business, but of Mr. C——’s scruples on the occasion,—contrived to put an end to them at once,—by adding a little premature jealousy to the rest of his unpleasant feelings on the subject of the lovely Leonora.

‘ I know my countrywomen well,’ said the insidious Italian, ‘ and my regard for
‘ your character in the world, and the
‘ comforts of your future life, makes me
‘ shudder at the idea of your marrying a
‘ runaway girl from a convent. — Sup-
‘ posing her even to be a paragon of virtue,
‘ who will be found so unsuspicious as to
‘ give any credit to the chastity of her
‘ character,

‘ character, under the circumstances of
‘ her connexion with you.—Besides, if it
‘ were possible that such a marriage could
‘ be so explained to the world as not to
‘ disgrace you in the opinion of the better
‘ part of mankind,—let me ask you what
‘ dependence you can have on the future
‘ fidelity of a woman, whose passions the
‘ most sacred oaths could not controul?—
‘ When she has broken the strongest possible
‘ engagements that can be made,
‘ before the altars of her own church, and
‘ under the most awful sanctions of her
‘ own religion, what reliance can you
‘ have upon any engagement she may
‘ make under any ceremony or restriction
‘ which can be proposed by laws, and a
‘ religion to which she is a stranger, if she
‘ finds a temptation, from passion, vanity,
‘ or caprice, to break it.’

“ This last idea, so wounding to a sensible and delicate mind, had a more powerful effect than all the other suggestions on
Mr.

Mr. C——'s wavering mind;—and on the Italian's undertaking, as a matter of very easy arrangement, to persuade Leonora to be satisfied with a connexion that did not require the nuptial benediction,—Mr. C—— immediately dispatched him to conduct her to the house I have already pointed out to you,—and which was elegantly prepared for her reception.

“ This gentleman, I must inform you, notwithstanding his conduct at present wears rather an unfavourable appearance,—was a character whose honour would have triumphed over his passion, if he had been so fortunate, as, in this particular crisis, to have consulted an honourable man.—He had himself, more than once, formed the plan of meeting Leonora,—telling her all the circumstances of his situation, without reserve,—presenting her a settlement, which would afford her and her companions a very comfortable provision during their lives,—and then to take his leave,
and

and see her no more.——In pursuing such a determination, he would have acted in a manner that could have left no reproach behind, either in his own mind, or the opinion of the world;—but, most unhappily for all concerned in this melancholy adventure,—he had placed his confidence in a villain, who laughed at his scruples,—inflamed his passions, and promised an easy gratification of them.

“ Leonora, however, was a woman of a superior mind, and whose affections, ardent as they were,—had never swerved for a moment from the paths of inflexible honour;—and though the high-wrought artifice with which she was surrounded,—the novelty of her situation,—the continual amusements in which she was engaged, to dissipate her attention,—and the specious excuses which were made, to silence any rising apprehension,—operated, for several weeks to preserve her tranquillity,—she at length discovered, by so common an accident

cident as overhearing a conversation at the opera, in her own language, that she was generally considered as the mistress of Mr. C——. She could scarce believe her senses when she heard the suggestion;—but she was astonished with the truth of it, when, on applying by letter to him on the subject, that very night, — she received, the following morning, an unequivocal proposition to adopt the disgraceful situation.

“ Her conduct on this occasion was the result of a great mind.—The pride of her birth would have made her suffer death rather than submit to that species of infamy which was proposed to her;—but that sentiment alone could not have produced the real magnanimity with which she sustained herself in the trying circumstances that surrounded her.

“ Leonora had been lavishly supplied with money for her journey from Italy,—

as

as well as for her expences in London;—and Mr. C——, with all the attention of a delicate mind, had contrived that she should have a letter of credit, to a considerable amount, on an eminent Leghorn merchant in the city, who was totally ignorant of the original source from whence it came,—or of the real circumstances of the fair fugitive for whom it was provided.—The widow lady who had accompanied Leonora, from the presents she had received, and the sale of some jewels she had brought with her, had no inconsiderable deposit in the same hands, and was now determined to support the future resolutions, and share the fate of her unhappy friend, whom she had helped to seduce into her present afflicting situation.—Leonora, therefore, was not in a state of pecuniary dependence, which would have rendered her incapable of the design she projected, and was determined to accomplish.—This was no less than to return immediately to Italy,—to present herself for

for re-admission at the gate of the convent from which she had fled, and court the punishment, and practise the penitence necessary to re-establish her situation in that asylum from the deceit of man, and the miseries of the world.

“ In a few hours after she had received Mr. C——’s last letter, this spirited woman waited upon the Italian merchant, and, after having engaged his secrecy, informed him of the particular nature of her situation;—concluding the communication with an account of the resolution she had formed, and a most urgent request of his assistance to enable her to put it into immediate execution.

“ Mr. L—— is a man who combines the integrity of commercial life with those benevolent sentiments, and liberal principles, that would do honour to any station. This gentleman, therefore, did not hesitate

tate an instant to approve her general determination, and promised to forward it in the most effectual manner,—on condition that she should remain in some secure place of retreat, till he had tried whether it was not possible, by his interest among the Italian ministers at this court, with all of whom he is more or less connected,—to procure her an admission into some religious community, where she might enter without that apprehension of severe discipline, and lasting suspicion, which would be the inevitable consequence of her return to the convent from whence she had made her escape.—He also, with his characteristic benevolence, undertook to provide for the poor old sacristan, during the remainder of his life,—and solemnly engaged to keep the whole of the business an absolute secret from Mr. C——, till it would be no longer in his power to occasion any obstructions to the final completion of it.

With

“ With such friendly, zealous, and powerful aid, Leonora found no difficulty in putting the more immediate part of her plan into instant execution.—The following day she quitted London for ever, and in a very short time was out of the possible reach of any persecuting enquiry.—Previous to her departure she wrote a farewell letter to Mr. C——, which was not transmitted to him till some days afterwards;—and as he left town immediately on sending his last proposition to her, he did not receive her affecting valediction till near a week after it was written.

“ This letter was dictated in the language, and contained the sentiments of superior virtue. — It conveyed nothing like disappointed passion, or female upbraiding.—The characters were not blotted with tears,—nor did the hand that wrote it appear to have trembled in performing its office.—It bore the form of being sent for no other purpose but to

implore, in the most urgent manner, that he would not persecute her by any attempt to discover her retreat;—and to assure him, with the most solemn imprecations, that if he should again intrude upon her presence, she was prepared to die in his sight.

“ This answer from Leonora,—so different from what he had deceived himself into the expectation of receiving,—and written in a manner so wounding to his honour, and so affecting to his heart,—awakened him at once to a true sense of his conduct.—Every low and sensual passion died within him,—and his whole soul glowed with the desire to make the reparation that became his honour, and he hastened to perform it;—but Leonora was fled;—all his endeavours to discover the place of her retreat were fruitless;—and from the language of her letter, and several corroborating circumstances, his alarms looked to the worst that could happen;—
and

and he was at length convinced that, actuated by her despair, she had put an end to her existence.—This circumstance had such a violent effect upon his mind, that he determined to avenge her, by putting an end to his own.—He therefore armed himself for the deadly purpose,—went to the house where she lived, and, after having written a letter to his mother, with the same pen, as it appeared, which Leonora had employed in her last epistle to him,—he discharged the fatal pistol,—and fell lifeless on the bed where Leonora had so often, and so vainly dreamed of the happiness she hoped to enjoy with him.”

“ And under the same circumstances,” exclaimed Don Cleofas, “ however unphilosophical or criminal it might have been, I should have completed the business in the same manner.—Philosophy is a fine thing,—and patience is an admirable virtue,—but men sometimes find themselves in such sudden and unexpected

N 2

positions

positions of misery, that neither of them have power to act, and are overwhelmed in the irresistible eddy of contending passions.—Indeed this event before us, which, considered in a general view of it, I contemplate with horror, fills me with the sincerest compassion, when I consider it as proceeding from a predominant sense of honour, and the sacrifice of a virtuous remorse.—Besides, I have my apprehensions also, that your story will not finish without another death;—and that the lovely, faithful, and ever to be lamented Leonora, will pine away in grief and disappointment.—I look for a broken heart to complete the catastrophe.”

“ Your expectations,” answered Asmodeus, “ will be pleasingly disappointed;—that woman will maintain a greatness of mind that will enable her not only to bear, but to surmount the difficulties of her situation.—Indeed the whole of her conduct, when it comes to be developed, as it must
shortly

shortly be, will have such an effect on the minds even of Mr. C——'s relations, that they will interest themselves, with the most affectionate zeal, in her future welfare;—and, by their friendship, she will be established in a situation where, ignorant of her unhappy lover's fate, she will live, and close her life in privacy and peace.

“ I see your countenance brighten into satisfaction at the manner in which I have closed Leonora's history;—and it almost grieves me that I must so soon introduce you to another scene of distress, by directing your immediate attention to the lower room of a large white house, with some flowering shrubs on a platform before it: there you will see a lady in the arms of her female servants, and a gentleman alternately paying attention to her distress, and bestriding the room in agony and tears.—They are both in a state of grief that almost borders on distraction, at the loss of
an

an only daughter, a beautiful little girl of nine years, who unhappily caught a fever, by dancing too much at a ball, which last night put an end to her life.—The arrival of some of the preliminaries of her interment, has renewed the paroxysms of sorrow which you now contemplate.”

“ Did I misconceive you, my good friend,” demanded the Count, “ or is it the custom of this enlightened nation to admit children, at such an early period, into the participation of their elegant pleasures?”

“ Not absolutely so,” replied the Demon, “ but it is become a fashion among persons in the great world, to give what are called children’s balls ;—or rather, to suffer their children to give them to each other.—To these festive meetings the young people of the different circles, from the age of seven to fourteen years, are reciprocally invited ; — where they dance,
sup,

sup, sit up to a late hour, and rehearse the parts they are hereafter to act on the stage of fashionable life.—This custom is considered as of so much importance to the views of our fraternity,—that the infernal divan have very lately commissioned a spirit to superintend and promote it.

“ These parties, you must perceive, are finely calculated to dispose the female mind,—for the children of the other sex, whose mode of education takes them from home, are, at least, out of this scrape,—to an early love of dress, pleasure, and dissipation, which even, when acquired in a more advanced state, affords the best preparation to folly and depravity.—The next generation, believe me, will feel all the beneficial effects which can result from such a practice.—But I shall defer any further explanations on this business, till I have the honour of introducing you to one of those interesting little assemblies.”